Luther's Works

The Freely Given Edition

Tessaradecas Triglottas

or

The Trilingual Fourteen

With an Introduction and
Notes by Luke Smith

A.D. 1519, Part I

Austin - 2025

Δωρεὰν ἐλάβετε, δωρεὰν δότε.

Luther's Works: The Freely Given Edition. *Volume 1: Tessaradecas Triglottas*

2025, Luke Smith

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents 7
List of Figures 9
Abbreviations 11
Preface 13
Gallery of Figures 15
Introduction 27
Timeline 49
Works Included in This Volume 51
TESSERADECAS CONSOLATORIA 53
Appendix A: Consolacyon for troubled consciences. 135
Appendix B: A Right and Comfortable Treatise 155

List of Figures

Figure 1 *The Fourteen Helpers in Need*, 1506 by Lucas Cranach
Figure 2 The interior of St. Mary's Church, Torgau
Figure 3 Present-day location of *The Fourteen Helpers in Need*; the resting place of Sophie of Mecklenberg-Schwerin.
Figure 4 *The Holy Kinship* (so-called "Torgau Altarpiece"), 1509 by Lucas Cranach
Figure 5 *Karte des Zentgerichtsbezirks Staffelstein*, 1504
Figure 6 Earliest depiction of the Fourteen Holy Helpers at the Dominican church St. Blaise, Regensburg, *ca*. 1320
Figure 7 Map of Germany
Figure 8 George Spalatin, the translator of the *Tessaradecas Consolatoria*, 1537
Figure 9 *Frederick the Wise, Duke of Saxony*, 1525 by Lucas Cranach
Figure 10 *Martin Luther as an Augustinian Monk*, 1520 by Lucas Cranach
Figure 11 Woodcut of Frederick the Wise and Duke John the Constant, 1509 by Lucas Cranach
Figure 12 Detail of the 1504 *Karte des Zentgerichtsbezirks Staffelstein*
Figure 13 Detail of a woodcut from the 1596 edition of Hermann Leicht's visions
Figure 14 *Maria im Weingarten*
Figure 15 Interior of *Maria im Weingarten*
Figure 16 Detail of the map of Germany, focusing on the relevant locations visited by Frederick and Luther
Figure 17 *Hartenfels Castle* from the River Elbe
Figure 18 The courtyard of Hartenfels Castle and *Großer Wendelstein*
Figure 19 Woodcut of *Schlosskirche*, 1509 by Lucas Cranach

Abbreviations

ANF	*The Ante-Nicene Fathers: The Writings of the Fathers Down to A.D. 325*, 10 vols., Christian Literature Company, Buffalo and New York, 1885-1896.
DRA	*Deutsche Reichstagsakten, Jüngere Reihe, unter Kaiser Karl V.* Erster Band: Kluckhorn, August (Gotha: Friedrich Andreas Perthes, 1893). Zweiter Band: Wrede, Adolf (Gotha: Friedrich Andreas Perthes, 1896).
EA	*Dr. Martin Luther's sämmtliche Werke* (Frankfurt and Erlangen, 1826-1857). 137 vols. Commonly called the Erlangen Edition of Luther's Works.
NPNF	*A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, The Christian Literature Company, 1886-1900. First series: 14 vols. Second series: 14 vols.
PE	*Works of Martin Luther with Introductions and Notes*, 6 vols, A. J. Holman Company, Philadelphia, 1915-1932. Commonly called the Philadelphia Edition of Luther's Works.
Phetsanghane	*The Fourteen Consolations for Those Who Are Weary and Burdened* edited by Souksamay Phetsanghane on academia.edu
PL	Patrologia Latina, 217 vols., Jacques Paul Migne, 1841-1855
St.L	Joh. Georg Walch's *Dr. Martin Luthers Sämmtliche Schriften*, repr. by Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 23 vols. Commonly called the St. Louis Edition of Luther's Works
WA	Weimar Edition, Schriften, 72 vols., Weimar. The full title is *D. Martin Luthers Werke: kritische Gesamtausgabe*. It is also called the *Weimarer Ausgabe* (WA).
WA Tr.	Weimar Edition, Tischreden, 6 vols.
WA Br.	Weimar Edition, Briefwechsel, 18 vols.

Preface

"No one can serve two masters: Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."
Matthew 6:24, Berean Standard Bible

There is a real and present need in the Church to follow Christ's command to freely give. Ministry is never to be sold and yet it is routinely assigned a price by those who claim faith. Devotionals and prayer books, items Christians turn to in desperation and confusion to find God, are denied to believers based solely on the criterion of payment. This is in stark contrast to Luther who allowed his works to fly freely across Europe through the copying and distribution of them by printers. He never earned a penny despite the enormous profit secured by others by their sale. His words are clear:

> I have begun no division and no rebellion, but, so far as I was able, I have helped the worldly rulers, even those who persecuted the Gospel and me, to maintain their power and honor. But I have stopped with committing the matter to God and relying confidently at all times upon His hand. Therefore, He has not only preserved my life in spite of the pope and all the tyrants (and this many really consider a great miracle; as I myself must also confess that it is), but He has caused my Gospel always to increase and spread. Now you interfere with me. You want to help the Gospel and do not see that by what you are doing you are hindering it and holding it down in the highest degree.[1]

Current Lutheran scholarship and study suffer immensely from the restrictions of copyright and payment that prevent the free distribution of resources. Single volumes are sold at a price it would cost to print the entire series they belong to. Textual restrictions eliminate the possibility of translation or adaptation in an age when the Good News is needed most. Do we want others to have Luther's guiding words or not? We are told that the Reformer belongs on the nightstand and not on the shelf. Should the company of such a close companion be sold?

The reader will see below that after fifteen years of copying and re-copying *The Fourteen of Consolation* was "so sadly corrupted and mutilated that many passages are missing." Luther, however, chose to continue in his evangelism, trusting in God to protect His Gospel and His Word. Such corruption need not be the case today; we have a great advantage over the 16th century. With the use of modern computing, texts and documents can be flawlessly transmitted in an instant. We, as in most matters of faith, have a far more convenient and leisurely time than those who came before us. May God grant us the faith to live out His will!

This edition of Luther's work is therefore freely given to not only prevent the compromise of ministry by its sale and to follow the admirable example of Luther, but, as matters most of all, to follow our Lord's command and teaching (Matt 10:8). Did not Jesus feed five thousand men when all thought there was nothing to give? We hear Him say that to those who much has been given, much will be expected. We, meanwhile, bathe in the wealth of the Western world and refuse to lend expecting nothing in return. Let us generously support the free ministry of the Gospel so that all may hear the comfort and call of the Word of God.

Further Reading

Case, Andrew, Conley Owens, Jon Here, *et. al. Abolish the Jesus Trade: Spread the Joy of Freely Giving* (SellingJesus, 2025, sellingjesus.org/book)

Owens, Conley *The Dorean Principle: A Biblical Response to the Commercialization of Christianity* (FirstLove Publications, 2021, thedoreanprinciple.org/)

[1] *An Admonition to Peace*, PE 4, 232-233

Gallery of Figures

Fig. 1: The Fourteen Helpers in Need, *ca. 1506 (Public domain)*

Fig. 2: The interior of St. Mary's Church, Torgau as seen on October 5, 2019. The present-day location of The Fourteen Helpers in Need *is at the entrance to the choir. In the above photograph it may be seen peeking out from behind a column in the bottom right corner. (Photo by Wikimedia Commons user Radler59. CC BY-SA 4.0)*

Fig. 3: A close-up view of the present-day location of The Fourteen Helpers in Need *over the resting place of Sophie of Mecklenberg-Schwerin. As seen on July 12, 2012. (Photo by Wikimedia Commons user Concord. CC BY-SA 3.0. The original image has been cropped to fit in the present work.)*

Fig. 4: The Holy Kinship *(so-called "Torgau Altarpiece") (1509) (Public domain)*

Fig. 5: 1504 Karte des Zentgerichtsbezirks Staffelstein *which contains the earliest known depiction of the Pilgrimage Church of the Fourteen Holy Helpers (cf. the Introduction for a detail and an explanation of the date). (Image courtesy of Stadtmuseum Bad Staffelstein/Andreas Bornschlegel. According to the European General Data Protection Regulation, Stadtmuseum Bad Staffelstein holds the rights to this image for fifty years and it is only released for this publication in that time.)*

Fig. 6: The earliest known depiction of the Fourteen Holy Helpers as seen on October 13, 2013. Found on the south wall of the Dominican church St. Blaise, Regensburg; it is dated to ca. 1320. (Photo by Wikimedia Commons user Sfischer. CC BY-SA 3.0. The original photograph has been cropped to fit the present work.)

Fig. 7: A map of Germany showing the locations of Frankfurt am Main, Coburg, Altenburg, Torgau, Wittenberg, Erfurt, Nürnberg, and the chapel dedicated to the Vierzehnheiligen. *See the detail in the introduction below. (Base map courtesy of Lencer and NordNordWest. CC BY-SA 3.0. The original work has been modified through the inclusion of red dots marking the locations of Torgau, Altenburg, and* Vierzehnheiligen *with their respective text.)*

Fig. 8: George Spalatin, the translator of the Tessaradecas Consolatoria, *1537 (Public Domain)*

Fig. 9: Frederick the Wise, Duke of Saxony. ca. 1525 painting by Lucas Cranach the Elder. (Public domain)

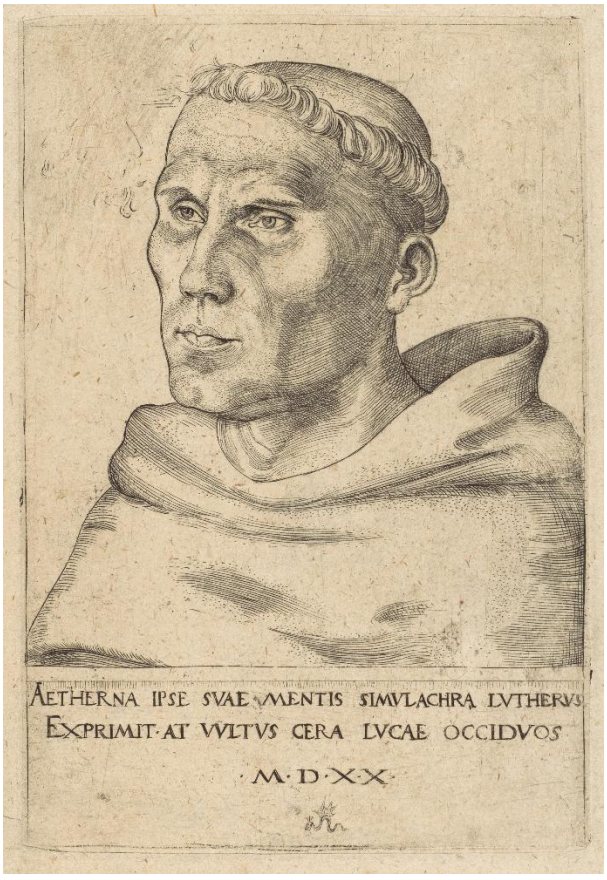

Fig. 10: Martin Luther as an Augustinian Monk. 1520 engraving by Lucas Cranach the Elder. (Public domain)

Introduction

At the cost of efficiency, the following introduction attempts to provide the student of Luther with an in-depth understanding of the background, context, and results of his *The Fourteen of Consolation*. Some material demands to be included due to its fresh insight, but other material holds a far less critical place and simply provides English speakers for the first time with knowledge of select topics of this slice of the Reformation world.

The Origin and Structure of the Work

In 1519 Frederick the Wise (Fig. 9) fell into a period of severe illness[2] returning from the Imperial Diet at which Charles of Spain was elected Holy Roman Emperor. Characteristic of Frederick's role in this election was a refusal of bribes, even that of a cardinal's hat from Pope Leo X supposedly meant for Luther (Fig. 10) if he were to recant.[3] Both the strenuous journey to Frankfurt and his exertion in his influential role[4] at the high-stakes imperial election in June 1519 depleted the Elector, consigning him to illness in his fifty-sixth year. At his residence in Torgau, Hartenfels Castle (Ger. *Schloss Hertenfels*. See Figs. 17 and 18), he suffered from "violent fever, gout, and kidney stone colic" for almost eight weeks. [5] Many believed he would never recover.

While Frederick the Wise faced death, George Spalatin (Fig. 8), court chaplain and longtime friend of Luther's, requested that Luther write a consolatory piece for him.[6] Spalatin was made court chaplain around the year 1513 and was thoroughly trusted by the Elector until he, Frederick, passed away in 1525.[7] Luther naturally felt not only a Christian need to but also an obligation to compose a work because of the Elector's already years-long protection from Rome. [8]

The structure Luther chose for his Fourteen is modeled after a group of fourteen saints that was widely popular in Germany at the time. Each served to protect or heal in his own way, yet it was the collective with their combined strength that many sought healing from.[9] With potential early local variation, they were:

1. Denis of Paris: headache and rabies. A 3rd century martyr executed by decapitation, often depicted holding his head. He is said to have carried his head while preaching after his decapitation to his burial place. It was here an abbey and, later, a basilica would be built.
2. Erasmus (also called Elmo): colic and cramp. A 3rd century martyr.
3. Blaise: throat ailments. A 4th century martyr.
4. Barbara: lightning, fire, explosion, sudden and evil death. She is said to have been killed by her father, who was subsequently killed by lightning. As with many saints, her grave was said to have been the site of miracles.
5. Margaret the Virgin: demonic possession, pregnant women. A 3rd century martyr whose mother is said to have died in childbirth with her.
6. Catherine of Alexandria: philosophers and students. A 3rd century virgin and martyr who was noted for her studiousness.
7. George: soldiers. A martyr said to have been a Roman soldier himself in the 3rd century.
8. Achatius: hunters. According to tradition he was a centurion martyred for his faith.
9. Eustace: hunters. He is said to have seen a vision of the cross while hunting, leading to his

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[2] Originally briefly recounted by George Spalatin with mention of certain physicians in his biography of Frederick the Wise. See Spalatin, *Friedrichs des Weisen: Leben und Zeitgschichte* Nuedecker and Preller, eds. (Jena: Friedrich Mauke, 1851) 36-37. Spalatin had traveled with Frederick to the Imperial Diet and back.

[3] Consult Schweibert, Ernest G. *Luther and His Times: The Reformation from a New Perspective* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1950), 39-42 and 381 for details about the roles of Frederick the Wise and Spalatin in election.

[4] Smith, Preserved, tr. and ed. *Luther's Correspondence and Other Contemporary Letters* (Philadelphia: The Lutheran Publishing Society, 1913), 45, n. 2.

[5] Boehmer, Heinrich *Road to Reformation*, Doberstein, John W. and Theodore G. Tappert, trs. (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1946), 298. For the duration I take Heinrich Boehmer's *Der Junge Luther* (Leipzig: Koehler and Amelang, 1939), 243 against *Road to Reformation* which has made a mistake by replacing "eight weeks" with "eight months". Spalatin in his *Friedrichs des Weisen: Leben und Zeitgeschichte* (Mauke, 37) gives the duration of the illness as eight weeks.

[6] Cf. the dedicatory epistle below.

[7] Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 27

[8] Cf. the dedicatory epistle below.

[9] *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (1967), vol. 5, "Fourteen Holy Helpers", 1045-6

conversion. Tradition says he was martyred in A.D. 118.
10. Pantaleon the Physician: tuberculosis. He is said to have been a physician to the emperor and martyred in 305.
11. Giles: epilepsy, sterility, insanity. He resided in the forest as a hermit in the 7th century.
12. Cyriac the Deacon: demonic possession. A 3rd century martyr.
13. Vitus the Martyr: epilepsy, lightning, attacks from animals, and oversleeping. Dances in front of his statue were done on his feast day, the name of which was later given to Sydenham's chorea.
14. Christopher the Giant: travelers. A 3rd century martyr.

Nearly all of these saints are said to have served as protectors during times of plague in one way or another, possibly causing their grouping together.[10]

It was these superstitious individuals that Luther sought to replace with true comfort in the *Fourteen of Consolation*.

The structure of Luther's writing is also based on the contemporary altarpiece, a multi-paneled piece of art with religious imagery that would be placed behind an altar (e.g. Fig. 4). If *The Fourteen of Consolation* were physical, it would be a two-paneled altar screen: Part I corresponding to the panel depicting the evils and Part II corresponding to the panel depicting the blessings. Each panel would have had seven spiritual images: the blessing or evil (1) within, (2) before, (3) behind, (4) on the left hand, (5) on the right hand, (6) beneath, and (7) above. In this work, Luther gives each spiritual image its own chapter within its respective part.

The Origin of the Fourteen Holy Helpers and Their Veneration

From 1346 to 1349 the Black Death swept across Germany. Her population experienced widespread physical ailing through fever, headaches, nausea, joint pain, and death which led to the invocation of protective saints, specifically the Fourteen Holy Helpers. It is important to remember that during this period an older and looser form of the group of the Holy Helpers existed with varying individuals based on location, contrasted against the later and more rigid group venerated later.[11] Naturally, such a dark period of economic, political, and physical crisis led to the immediate seeking of relief from temporal strife.

It is unclear how the Fourteen Holy Helpers were grouped together, but it is suspected that early on their relics gathered the faithful, promoting their veneration. The earliest known depiction of the Fourteen "is a fresco in the Dominican church of St. Blaise in Regensburg"[12] dated to *ca*. 1320 (see Fig. 6). However, it has been suggested that even well before the Black Death boosted the devotion to the Fourteen Holy Helpers, that their grouping originated as early as A.D. 609. On May 13 of this year Pope Boniface IV was granted permission from Emperor Phocas to dedicate the Pantheon in Rome to the "Blessed Virgin Mary and all the martyrs."[13] He is said to have replaced each of the fourteen pagan idols with an altar and took twenty-eight cartloads of the bones of martyrs as relics from the catacombs beyond the walls of Rome.[14] These bones were placed "in a porphyry basin beneath the high altar."[15] The tale of the twenty-eight carts with their convenient number (twice fourteen) is considered to have been a legend that was invented during the Counter-Reformation, about a millennium after the fact.[16] In addition, giving the Fourteen Holy Helpers the birthyear A.D. 609 is both early and specific enough to cause issues regarding the inclusion of St. Giles. Giles was born *ca*. 650 and died *ca*. 710 and clearly could not have been included in the theorized original group at the Pantheon. However, with the fluidity of members known to have existed throughout the German lands, he could have bumped an earlier saint and become the standard.

Another hypothesis is that the number fourteen was chosen instead of the preferred twelve because it corresponded to the number of witnesses to the resurrection.[17] Both groups contain three women and eleven men. Concerning the individuals who composed

[10] Hammer, Bonaventure *Mary, Help of Christians and the Fourteen Saints Invoked as Holy Helpers* (Benziger Bros., 1909), 154-155
[11] Ruderich, Peter *Vierzehnheiligen: Eine Baumonographie* (Bamberg: Collibri Verlag, 2000), 23
[12] *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (1967), vol. 5, "Fourteen Holy Helpers" 1045-6
[13] Kelly, J. N. D. *The Oxford Dictionary of Popes* "Boniface, St" (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 69.
[14] Jackson, Samuel M., ed. *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge* (Funk & Wagnalls Co., 1909). vol. 5, "Helpers in Need, The Fourteen" 215-216.
[15] From: http://oce.catholic.com/index.php?title=Popes_Boniface_III-VII which is archived at the WayBackMachine.
[16] Marder, Tod A. and Mark Wilson Jones *The Pantheon: From Antiquity to the Present* Thunø, Erik "The Pantheon in the Middle Ages" (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015)
[17] Ruderich, *op. cit.*, 23

the Fourteen Helpers, they may have been chosen for their appeal to various walks of life. There were three bishops, three knights, three virgins, and five additional versatile saints already widely known and venerated: Pantaleon, Christopher, Agathius, Cyriacus, and Vitus. The bishops are thought to have catered to churchmen, knights to the nobility, and virgins to devout urban women.[18]

It has also been speculated by some that the accounts associated with St. Christopher were a fresh embodiment of the old Germanic folktale of Wade[19], giving him a head start for veneration. Wade[20], sometimes called Vadi, was a giant in Sjoland with his son. To educate his son in smithing they began a journey to the home of certain dwarves. However, when they reached Graenasound, there were no ships providing passage, requiring Wade to place his thirteen-year-old son on his shoulders and cross the water which was nine ells[21] deep. Similarly, legend says that St. Christopher the Giant, once he converted to Christianity, dedicated himself to carrying travelers across a river. On one of his trips he is said to have borne the Christ child, a development on the meaning of 'Christopher': Christ-bearer.[22]

However the veneration of the Fourteen Holy Helpers began, for centuries they permeated the German lands, radiating out from Ratisbon and Bamberg.[23] In fact, they became so prevalent the Council of Trent discouraged their veneration[24] as they appeared to them to supersede Christ's role as chief mediator.

Despite the centuries-long attention given to the Fourteen Helpers, it was not until the 15th century that veneration for them reached its height and stabilized into a set group. When a boy named Hermann Leicht saw a band of fourteen children in one vision of a series of four, according to the records there was no doubt as to who they were.[25] This experience would later cause a centralized pilgrimage church for the Fourteen, which is discussed in the following section.

The Pilgrimage Church of the Fourteen Holy Helpers Until the Time of Frederick and Luther

Hermann Leicht was a young shepherd[26] to whom the founding legend of the Pilgrimage Church of the Fourteen Holy Helpers (Ger. *Wallfahrtskirche Vierzehnheiligen*) ascribes four saintly visions. They are given here:[27]

1. On September 24, 1445 Leicht was driving his flocks home as the sun was setting, and, at the sound of a child crying, Leicht turned to see an infant sitting nearby in a field; but, when he approached him to pick him up, the child donned a friendly countenance and quickly disappeared.
2. Now unsettled, Leicht drove the flocks more quickly, when glancing at the spot the child was, he saw him again. This time he was between two burning candles.[28] Leicht made the sign of the Cross,[29] but seeing a friendly look on the child's face, approached him, only for him to disappear again.
3. Now thoroughly troubled, Leicht chose to confide in the priest of the Langheim monastery, which managed the land, what he saw. He was told to ask what the Child desired in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit if he were to see him again. This did not occur until the next summer, on June 29, 1446, when the child at sunset appeared naked, with a red cross across his chest, and surrounded by fourteen other children in red and white clothes.[30] After inquiring what they

[18] As suggested by Ruderich, *op. cit.*, 23
[19] Andreas, Willy *Deutschland vor der Reformation: Eine Zeitenwende* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1932), 165
[20] The following account is drawn from Haymes, Edward R., tr. *The Saga of Thidrek of Bern*, vol. 56, Series B, Garland Library of Medieval Literature (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1988).
[21] An ell is either the length of a man's arm or foreman.
[22] *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (1967), vol. 3, "Christopher, St.", 663.
[23] Farmer, David Hugh *The Oxford Dictionary of Saints* "Fourteen Holy Helpers"
[24] Farmer, *op. cit.*, "Fourteen Holy Helpers"
[25] Ruderich, *op. cit.*, 21
[26] He has also been called the son of a shepherd. Leicht is a historically attested individual as records after the four visions prove (Hlaváček, Petr "Konrad Konhofer († 1452) as an Opponent of Jan Hus and the Bohemian Reformation" [Filosofický časopis Philosophical Journal, 2015], 90).
[27] This account of the four visions is drawn from *Geschichtliches Bericht von dem Wallfahrtsorte Vierzehnheiligen zu Frankenthal in Oberfranken* (Frankenthal: Verlag des Klosters, 1867), 6-8 and Ruderich, *op. cit.*, 20-21
[28] It is interesting to note that during the Middle Ages candles were frequently deposited at the shrines of saints in pilgrimage churches, especially in England (Nilson, Ben "The Medieval Experience at the Shrine" in *Pilgrimage Explored* ed. by J. Stopford, 106).
[29] Cf. Part I, ch. vii: "Whoever is yet far from this state of mind, for him the Passion of Christ has little value; as it is with those who use the sign and arms of Christ to ward off evils and death, that so they may neither suffer pain nor endure death, which is altogether contrary to the cross and death of Christ."
[30] Ruderich *op. cit.*, 20

wanted as told by the priest, Leicht was told that they wished for the construction of a chapel on the spot they appeared.

4. Later in the same week Leicht saw once again two burning candles, but this time they came down from the clouds and were also seen by a woman passing by.

After a second report to the local monastery of what Leicht saw, the monastery sat in doubt on the veracity of the story. It was not until about two weeks later when an ill maid from the convent was healed at the site that the monastery decided to place a cross where Leicht had his visions.[31] Later, presumably due to the words of the child and the large numbers of visiting pilgrimages, the decision was made to construct a chapel on the site of the vision at the monastery's own cost. After about a year or two[32] of construction the chapel's high altar was consecrated on April 28, 1448.[33] It appears funding and time was only available for the construction of the chancel at this date.[34] Indulgences were also granted to the pilgrims to encourage their visits, signifying church approval at the highest level. These were granted on April 28, 1448; November 5, 1448; 1451; May 9, 1456; and September 7, 1497.[35] It took until ten years after the first vision to complete the entire pilgrimage chapel with a payment from Bishop Anton von Rotenhan.[36]

Evidently at this early time there was enough cash from the pilgrims to fight over, as a dispute arose between the Langheim monastery; Heinrich Rosenberger, the pastor of Staffelstein; and the Bishop of Bamberg, all of whom had a presence in the area, over who had the rights to the offerings. This conflict was resolved on November 1, 1450 after a meeting supervised by Rome.[37] The terms were:[38]

1. One-third of the future offerings were to go to the Bishop of Bamberg.
2. The Langheim Monastery and the Bishop of Bamberg would contribute equally to the construction costs of the chapel with the requirement the bishop approve any plans beforehand.
3. The Langheim monastery would give the tithes from Wallenstadt to Rosenberger to replace his lost income from the pilgrimage site.

Later, in 1506, Langheim Monastery would purchase from George Schenk von Limpurg (1470-1522), the Bishop of Bamberg, his share of the site's offerings for 2,000 Rhenish guilders.[39] This further solidified the monastery's control and economic privilege.

Frederick the Wise's Connection to the Fourteen Holy Helpers

There is likely more significance behind Luther's choice of a structure for *The Fourteen of Consolation* based on the Fourteen Holy Helpers than a simple a dislike of them. Frederick the Wise had a deep connection to the Fourteen Holy Helpers, having lived all of his life during the height of their veneration and being born into a family with members such as his grandmother who paid particular attention to them (see below).

However, it was on his pilgrimage to and from the Holy Land that Frederick had a recorded personal interaction with the Fourteen. This is known through the accounting of the Elector's expenses on this trip by Hans Hundt in his *Rechnungsbuch* which spans the years 1493 and 1494. On November 15, 1493 Frederick visited the first chapel of the *Vierzehn Heiligen*[40] and placed two florins in the pyx[41] (Ger. *Opferstock*).[42]

Later, when Sophie of Mecklenburg-Schwerin (Fig. 3), the wife of John the Constant, Frederick's brother, passed

[31] Ruderich, *op. cit.*, 20

[32] The literature varies on when construction began: whether after the first two visions or after the second two.

[33] Ruderich, *op. cit.*, 28

[34] Ruderich, *op. cit.*, 28. Churches would construct the east/chancel end of chapels and churches first in order to have the altar up and ready for services as soon as possible while the remainder of the building was still to be built.

[35] Ruderich, *op. cit.*, 31, n. 197

[36] Bishop Anton von Rotenhan (1391-1459) was the bishop of Bamberg from 1434 until his death on May 5, 1459. See below for the terms of his agreement with the monastery.

[37] Ruderich, *op. cit.*, 28

[38] Ruderich, *op. cit.*, 28-29 and https://www.sueddeutscher-barock.ch/In-Werke/s-z/Vierzehnheiligen.html

[39] Ruderich, *op. cit.*, 35

[40] There has been some confusion regarding Frederick the Wise's trip to the pilgrimage site of the Fourteen Holy Helpers in past English scholarship. This is largely due to Holy Roman Emperor Frederick III (1415-1493) who shared a name with Elector Frederick III. The former took two visits to the pilgrimage site in 1474 and 1485 (Ruderich 35). These have been taken as visits by Elector Frederick III, commonly called Frederick the Wise. E.g. Hammer in *Mary, Help of Christians* etc., wrongly states it was "Elector Frederic [*sic*] III … [who] visited the chapel in 1485" (157).

[41] i.e. a strong box.

[42] Röhricht, Reinhold and Heinrich Meisner "*Hans Hundts Rechnungsbuch* (1493-1494)" in *Neues Archiv für Sächsische Geschichte und Alterthumskunde* Ermisch, Hubert, ed., 96.
Ruderich, *op. cit.*, 35

away at the age of twenty-one in Torgau on July 12, 1503, both John and Frederick the Wise decided to found an altar at St. Mary's Church in Torgau (Ger. *Stadtkirche St. Marien*. See Fig. 2) in her memory and to dedicate it both to St. Anne [43] and the Fourteen Holy Helpers. This happen ed in a deed dated July 19, 1505.[44] The choice of the Fourteen must have been second nature considering Frederick's already extensive interaction with their veneration.

For the altar a retable was created, with a predella composed of multiple panel paintings.[45] The only known member of this predella is the work *The Fourteen Helpers in Need* which was completed between the date of the establishing deed and the summer of 1508 (Fig. 1).[46] In this work by Lucas Cranach the Elder,[47] the Fourteen Holy Helpers are depicted with their respective symbolism. It is not certain if Luther was thinking of this work when composing *The Fourteen of Consolation* while Frederick was bed-ridden in Torgau, but the coincidence has been called "suggestive"[48] while others say he "must have had it in mind."[49] It is unclear if Luther would have visited Torgau by the time be wrote *The Fourteen of Consolation* and therefore have had the possibility to have seen *The Fourteen Helpers in Need* with his own eyes, however, he had already formed strong connections to the city of Torgau through work as an attorney [50] and conversation with Staupitz,[51] certainly allowing for him to be privy to many events occurring there such as the major work of the establishment of an altar.

In the case of Frederick the Wise, St. Mary's is just a seven-minute walk today from his residence there, allowing for him to certainly have had a great familiarity with the space even when ill. Indeed, Frederick had a covered walkway built in 1518 from his residence to the church, demonstrating his frequent visits to St. Mary's.[52] These facts mean that if Luther's work were to be a reference to *The Fourteen Helpers in Need*, Frederick the Wise would have recognized this.

Fig. 11: A 1509 woodcut of Frederick the Wise and his brother Duke John the Constant by Lucas Cranach the Elder from the first edition of the Wittenberg Reliquary book. (Public domain)

Indeed, it appears that Luther was making a bold choice in his usurpation of the fourteen saints at Torgau. He was criticizing the extensive commission of the Fourteen Holy Helpers in the memory of Frederick's sister-in-law at St. Mary's.

Sophie, however, was not Frederick's only personal connection to the Torgau Altarpiece. The story behind his own more intimate attachment to it is one that requires some background.[53]

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[43] St. Anne, the mother of the Virgin Mary, is not named in the sixty-six books of the Bible; however, she is identified in the so-called Gospel of James (*ca.* A.D. 150).

[44] Ritschel, Iris "Das Gemälde 'Die Vierzehn Nothelfer' und 'Christus als Schmerzensmann' in der Marienkirche zu Torgau" *Denkmalpflege in Sachsen: Mitteilungen des Landesamtes für Denkmalpflege Sachsen*, 1995, 40. Accessible online at: https://d-nb.info/1210865858 https://archiv.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/artdok/2781/
Ritschel provides an excerpt of the deed.

[45] Ritschel, *op. cit.*, 41-42

[46] Ritschel, *op. cit.*, 53

[47] For an explanation of Cranach's role in the production of *The Fourteen Helpers in Need* consult Ritschel, *op. cit.*, 52

[48] PE 1, 107

[49] Phetsanghane, 3

[50] Smith, Preserved *The Life and Letters of Martin Luther* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1911), 32 | St.L 21a, col. 50

[51] Smith, *The Life and Letters of Martin Luther*, 34 | St.L 21a, col. 78

[52] Ludolphy, Ingetraut *Friedrich der Weise: Kurfürst von Sachsen 1463-1525* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Rupprecht, 1984. repr. Leipzig: Leipziger Univeritätsverlag, 2006), 126

[53] The following draws on "*Anna Weller aus Molsdorf - Die große Liebe und Gattin des sächsischen Kurfürsten Friedrich des Weisen*" *Frauenschicksale aus dem 15. und 16. Jahrhundert* (https://www.kleio.org/de/geschichte/renaissance/frauen/anna-weller/)

Initially, Frederick the Wise's marriage proposals were refused by Margaret of Austria (1480 – 1530), the daughter of Emperor Maximilian I (1429 - 1519), and a woman of his same station. It then became his brother, John the Constant's, responsibility to marry an equal, which he did in 1500 to Sophie of Mecklenburg-Schwerin (mentioned above). As Frederick belonged to the Wettins, in which all sons had a claim on inheritance, a rule which, when implemented, weakened governance over time, he could not marry a woman of his same station and thereby create rival legitimate descendants to the heirs of John. This caused him to marry morganatically to Anna Weller of Molsdorf.[54] It was from this union with Anna Weller that Frederick would have children who would have no claim to the inheritance.

Despite the nature of Frederick's marriage, contemporaries knew of his children, the most important of which in relation to the present work is Luther as found in his table talk of May 1, 1539[55] (No. 4455):

> He [Luther] made mention of the Elector Frederick, who was a wise, astute, and discerning man. He hated pomp and performance. Therefore, he had not much trouble with women because he was a miracle of chastity and modesty. However, he loved the elegant. Therefore, he had with him a concubine, indeed, on the contrary, a wife, *die Wantzlerinne*,[56] from whom he begat three sons and one daughter: Fritz,[57] Bastel,[58] and Hieronymus. Then the most honorable one [Weller] was sent off with the daughter[59] and continued thus. And the elector, when persuaded by his nobles to regard Duke William,[60] which was brought about by this prince's mother,[61] sent from him Staupitz with the intention to consider a bride, but he [Staupitz] advised against the character [of this] to the elector: The rhymes do not suit him.[62] Truly she, *die Wantzlerinne*, although sent away, was said to have spoken: "I do not believe that the elector is another while I am alive." And the elector did not at any time consider it [the marriage], therefore there is between them a truth-like secret marriage. But, dear Lord God, kings and dukes are miserable people; they are obliged [in marital deliberation]. Citizens and peasants, on the contrary, may marry whomever they please. They [princes] must not marry below themselves. Our leader is a pious and modest husband. There is a great thing in him: he is a modest lover of his wife, which is a great gift in princes and kings.[63]

Fig. 12: Detail of the 1504 Karte des Zentgerichtsbezirks Staffelstein *which displays the earliest and only extant contemporary depiction of the first chapel for the Fourteen Holy Helpers as Luther and Frederick the Wise would have known it. (Image courtesy of Stadtmuseum Bad Staffelstein/Andreas Bornschlegel. According to the European General Data Protection Regulation, Stadtmuseum Bad Staffelstein holds the rights to this image for fifty years and it is only released for this publication in that time.)*

[54] Posterity is uncertain of the name of Frederick's partner. The earliest references style her as the mother of the Elector's two sons (only two of the sons were known to the public). The earliest mention we have that explicitly gives her name as Anna Weller is that of Johann Gottlob Boehmen in 1769 referencing an earlier unknown source (Ludolphy, *op. cit.*, 47-48 and 50).

[55] WA Tr. 4, xiv

[56] i.e. Anna Weller. It is suspected popularly that she was the widow of Frederick the Wise's courtier Bernhard Watzler, explaining how Luther created this term. It appears the only contemporary evidence for this claim is the will of Frederick the Wise written hours before his death in which "Fritz and Bastel's mother" appears in the sentence immediately before that one containing "Bernhard Watzler" (Ludolphy 49).

[57] i.e. Frederich

[58] i.e. Sabastian

[59] Posterity does not know the daughter's name.

[60] Likely William the duke of Jülich-Cleves-Berg

[61] Likely Duchess Maria of Jülich-Berg (WA Tr. 4, 322).

[62] *Die reyme sich nicht zu ihme.* My thanks go to E. Osterhaus for this suggested translation.

[63] Translation mine. | WA Tr. 4, 322

Additionally, a scene from Cranach to sit above the predella was also commissioned for the altarpiece. *The Holy Kinship*,[64] commonly called "The Torgau Altarpiece" (Fig. 4), was a triptych: a work composed of three sections. In the center panel of this work five of these six nuclear family members mentioned by Luther can be seen. Frederick the Wise is left, shown as Joseph seated with his hand to his head; Anna Weller is portrayed as the Virgin Mary, center; [65] with sons Frederick; Sebastian; and Hieronymus in varying states.[66] Finally, St. Anne, with the features of Sophie of Mecklenburg, holds the Christ child while in the gallery her three husbands are shown as claimed by the Golden Legend: [67] Joachim, with the features of Cranach; Cleophas, with the features of Emperor Maximilian I; and Salomas, with the features of Sixtus Oelhafen von Schöllenbach, an imperial councilor to Frederick. Frederick, moreover, is again depicted in the lefthand panel as Alphaeus with his wife Mary Cleophas and with two of their four sons in the domestic sphere. In the righthand panel John the Constant is depicted as Zebedee with his wife Mary Salome and their sons St. James the Greater and St. John the Evangelist.[68]

All seventeen members of the Holy Kinship are shown with St. Anne or, rather, Sophie, as a clear emphasis, a very appropriate choice when one considers that the altar was established in part to St. Anne and was intended to honor Sophie. It is her three husbands and her three daughters that unite the work. By her first husband, Joachim, she had the Virgin Mary. Once widowed, by her second husband, Cleophas, she had Mary, the wife of Alpheus. When Cleophas passed away, St. Anne married Salome, by whom she had Mary, who married Zebedee.

It may have been this corresponding piece of familial art that Luther had in mind when in Part II, chapter i of *The Fourteen of Consolation* he wrote to Frederick: "to some He grants offspring."

The secrecy of Frederick's marriage to Anna Weller has been overemphasized in the past, especially if an entire congregation would have seen evidence of the marriage each week at a church. Frederick's peers even knew of the marriage's existence and unabashedly referred to it in business. For example, in 1516 Francis I contacted Frederick to offer to educate his son in the French language and court. [69] He had heard from a French

Fig. 13: Maria im Weingarten *located in the village of Volkach as seen in December 2014. (Photo by Vitold Muratov. CC BY-SA 4.0)*

Fig. 14: The interior of Maria im Weingarten *as seen in September 2019. (Photo by Holger Uwe Schmitt. CC BY-SA 4.0)*

[64] The term 'Holy Kinship' refers to the seventeen-person extended family of Jesus through his grandmother St. Anne by Medieval tradition.

[65] Others have claimed possible or certain depiction of Anna Weller in *The Celestial Ladder of St. Bonaventura* or The Neustadt Altarpiece at Orla. Cf. also the possible depictions of Anna Weller at https://www.kleio.org/de/geschichte/stammtafeln/vip/2619/.

[66] The two sons in this central panel who are not Christ would belong to the marriage of Mary Cleophas and Alphaeus in the lefthand panel who had, according to the Golden Legend, had four sons: James the Less, Joseph Barsabbas, Simon the Zealot, and Jude, the traditional author of the Epistle of Jude.

[67] Chapter 131.

[68] Städel Museum's entry for The Holy Kinship ("Torgau Altarpiece") Accessible online at: https://sammlung.staedelmuseum.de/en/work/mary-salome-and-zebedaeus

St. James the Greater and St. John the Evangelist are two brothers of the Twelve Apostles. Zebedee was their father (Matthew 4:21-22) and Salome was identified as their mother (Mark 15:40–41 | Matthew 27:56). Salome was later thought to be Mary Salome in the Medieval period, one of the three Marys who were the daughters of St. Anne (see above), the mother of the Virgin Mary.

[69] Kluckhorn, August *Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Kaiser Karl V*. Jüngere Reihe, Erster Band (Gotha: 1893), 47. Henceforth

ambassador through a Saxon chamberlain that this was Frederick's desire for his son. Frederick expressed gratitude for the offer yet was hesitant and denied the idea's origin with him. He stated that if ever he did send his son to France, it would be to him at the French court.

When considering the evidence found in *The Fourteen of Consolation*, Luther appears to have had a deep knowledge of the sympathetic Elector's status, both publicly and privately, which certainly served as a benefit to one in legal limbo with the Empire and Roman Catholic Church.

Luther's Connection to the Fourteen Holy Helpers

Much has been said in past editions of the Elector's connection to the Fourteen Holy Helpers *via* the Torgau Altarpiece, but very little mention is ever made of Luther's history with these saints. One needs to remember that Luther grew up during the late 15th century, the period of the height of their veneration, and as a result, knew these saints from candid, non-academic interactions. One of these instances likely occurred *ca.* 1510 at the beginning of Luther's journey to Rome. The exact route he and his companion took from Erfurt to Rome is not known, however, certain stops along the way are. Critically, it is known he traveled from Erfurt to Nuernberg.[70] This would have taken him directly by the famed site of Leicht's visions where the first pilgrimage chapel was begun in 1447 and was still standing.[71]

In fact, the visions of Leicht placed the Pilgrimage Church of the Fourteen Holy Helpers in a remarkably advantageous position. It laid on the major north-south pilgrimage route from northern Germany to Rome, north of both the Italian offshoots toward Jerusalem and the German westward branch to Santiago[72] in Spain.[73] It would have been the Roman route that would have taken Luther to the *Vierzehnheiligen*.

What would Luther have seen, heard, and experienced at the first chapel in 1510 had he gone there? Most of the discussion about the physical features of the Pilgrimage Church of the Fourteen Holy Helpers has been on the

Fig. 15: Detail of a woodcut from the 1596 edition, which is likely a duplicate of the same from the 1519 edition, depicting a very loose rendering of the exterior of the first chapel. (PDM 1.0. Staatbibliothek Bamberg, 8v, photo by Gerald Raab.)

ostentatious basilica minor built from 1743 to 1772. This structure was built almost completely from scratch and is unlike what Luther would have seen on his journey. There is only one surviving contemporary depiction of the first chapel from a 1504[74] map of the "*Zentgerichtsbezirks*[75] *Staffelstein*"[76] (Figs. 5 and 12). Ruderich analyzes the free depiction of the chapel in this map that shows a hall, recessed chancel, three-story tower, and nave with a steep pitch to its southern roof as an indication that the chapel of the *Vierzehnheiligen* was fairly similar to other nearby pilgrimage churches in Franconia.[77] For example, a similar design is seen at the pilgrimage church *Maria im Weingarten*, which was constructed in the middle of the 15th century and still survives. This structure is located in

abbreviated as 'DRA I'.

[70] Schweibert, *op. cit.*, 181-2 and 192

[71] Hammer, *op. cit.*, 157

[72] This is the famous pilgrimage site St. James of Compostela that Luther repeatedly attacked in his writings.

[73] Ruderich, *op. cit.*, 34 provides a concise map of this description.

[74] Various works erroneously give 1508 as the date of the map. Correspondence with the Stadtmuseum Bad Staffelstein has revealed that "the '4' is a half-eight" and was "written in mirror script from the 15th/16th century."

[75] A type of judicial district.

[76] Ruderich, *op. cit.*, 29

[77] Ruderich, *op. cit.*, 29. He lists those contemporary pilgrimage churches in Burgwindheim, Dettelbach, Gößweinstein, and Volkach. A common form is known to have sprung up and spread in Europe for pilgrimage churches.

the village of Volkach and displays similarity to the original Pilgrimage Church of the Fourteen Holy Helpers as modern photography reveals (see Figs. 13 and 14).

The other possible surviving contemporary depiction of the first chapel is a woodcut included in the 1596 edition of the written account of Hermann Leicht's visions (Fig. 15).[78] It is thought this portrayal of the chapel is a duplication of a woodcut from the first edition of 1519 (mentioned below), which is now lost.[79] This woodcut has been deemed relatively inaccurate as it gives the chapel two towers[80] but confirms the general accuracy of the 1504 Staffelstein map.[81]

Despite the size of the original chapel, making it appear quaint in comparison to the present Basilica *Vierzehnheiligen*, it is likely that its past designation as a chapel betrayed the true grandeur of the church's interior. The site saw "a great many visitors"[82] and while the majority of them were members of the impoverished lower classes in search of healing,[83] nobility did make their appearances and hefty contributions. Emperor Frederick III visited once in November 1474 with Elector Albert Achilles of Brandenburg and Elector Ernst of Saxony[84] and again in October 1485.[85]

The Emperor's sister, Margaret of Austria, Electress of Saxony (*ca*. 1416-1486), the paternal grandmother of Frederick the Wise, even visited.[86] In 1453 she would create an organization which laid the foundation for a sanctuary of the Fourteen Holy Helpers in a ruined village near Jena. The church itself would later be consecrated in 1464.

At the time of Luther's journey to Rome, after these royal visits, there would have been a heated inn, which was present as early as 1508.[87] It served beer from the monastic brewery[88] as well as wine.[89] The location was also able to be reserved for familial or personal events such as weddings and baptisms; however, this practice was outlawed in 1520 due to a dispute with the town of Lichtenfelds.[90]

By the 1520s the Pilgrimage Church of the Fourteen Holy Helpers was lavishly furnished.[91] The retable had five gilded wooden figures and two painted wings with multiple scenes. There were also two side altarpieces with copper repoussé[92] and silver images of the Helpers. On a screen in the church pilgrims hung items symbolic of their goals: silver pendants, chains, wax models,[93] and clothing. Venetian glass was even used for the stained windows.

In 1525 the Peasants' War raged throughout the German lands. During this rebellion of the peasantry based on social and religious arguments the stream of pilgrims coming to the Church of the Fourteen Holy Helpers waned.[94] Franconia became under the rule of bands of peasants led by men such as Florian Geyer and Goetz von Berlichingen.[95] A group of these radical peasants eventually reached the pilgrimage site of the Fourteen Holy Helpers, with knowledge of its expensive ornaments. They burned the Langheim monastery, the provost's house, the inn, and the original chapel.[96] The peasants also carried off the organ (presumably the pipes),

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[78] Cyaneus, Johannes (1563-1661) *Franciados Libri III: Hoc Est, Poema De Apparitione, Ac Miracvlis Qvatvordecim Avxiliatorum in fundo Coenobij Langheimensis, Franciae Orientalis, & Episcopatus Bambergensis: qui locus, Francavallis appellatur* (Bamberg: per Antonium Horitzium) 107pp.

Public domain scans of this work may be viewed at: https://www.bayerische-bibliographie.de/id/baybib/BV013126137?sid=4549564

[79] Ruderich, *op. cit.*, 29

[80] Ruderich, *op. cit.*, 29. From later depictions in the 17th century Ruderich concludes the double tower depiction is the outlier (29, n. 178).

[81] In the *Kerzenraum* (candle room) of the Basilica of the *Vierzehnheiligen* is another depiction of one of the early chapels dedicated to the Fourteen Holy Helpers. This stained-glass window is composed of nine equally-sized squares. An epigraphic central panel is surrounded by the lower five showing the visions of Leicht with the top row of three showing a later chapel complex. While far from contemporary to Luther and Frederick the lower central square shows a similar structure to those already discussed. An image of this stained-glass window is viewable at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Vierzehnheiligen-Basilika4-Asio.JPG.

[82] Hammer, *op. cit.*, 157

[83] Ruderich, *op. cit.*, 35

[84] Elector Ernst of Saxony (1441-1486) was the predecessor of Frederick the Wise.

[85] Ruderich, *op. cit.*, 35

[86] Ruderich, *op. cit.*, 35

[87] Ruderich, *op. cit.*, 35

[88] This is recorded at https://www.sueddeutscher-barock.ch/In-Werke/s-z/Vierzehnheiligen.html

[89] Ruderich, *op. cit.*, 35

[90] Ruderich, *op. cit.*, 35, n. 234

[91] The following is based on the inventory compiled under the peasants who looted the chapel as described by Ruderich, *op. cit.*, 30-31.

[92] Repoussé is a term that refers to the practice of hammering a thin and flat piece of metal from behind to form a design in low relief.

[93] Wax models were often left by pilgrims whose desire for a cure had not been met to remind the saint of the ailment (Nilson, *op. cit.* 105).

[94] https://gobamberg.de/sehenswuerdigkeiten/vierzehnheiligen/

[95] AE 46, 47

[96] Weber, Heinrich *Vierzehnheiligen in Frankenthal* (Bamberg: 1884), 29

altar decorations,[97] cattle, what was stored in both the kitchen and the cellar, and the bells of the church;[98] yet they made an inventory of what they gathered, giving an idea of what the first chapel was like.[99] The total damage that the entire looting and arson caused was estimated to be 300,000 florins.[100] Even though the majority of the furnishings from the original chapel were eventually returned,[101] it would not be until 1530 that sufficient funds would be raised through mandatory taxes for a new chapel to be consecrated.[102]

Luther, found rarely with a still pen, responded forcefully to the actions and consequences of these rebellious peasants in varying works: *An Admonition to Peace, A Reply to the Twelve Articles of the Peasants in Swabia* (1525),[103] *Against the Robbing and Murdering Hordes of Peasants* (1525),[104] and *An Open Letter on the Harsh Book Against the Peasants* (1525).[105]

Mention of the Fourteen Holy Helpers is not limited to *The Fourteen of Consolation* in Luther's writing. In his *Exhortation to All Clergy Assembled at Augsburg* (1530) he wrote:

> What was your church-life before our Gospel came but daily innovations? They broke in, one after another; nay, they poured in like a cloud-burst. One set up St. Anne, another St. Christopher, another St. George, another St. Barbara, another St. Bastian, another St. Catherine, another the Fourteen; and who can tell the whole story of these new kinds of saint-worship? Are not these innovations?[106]

As to connections to the Fourteen Holy Helpers made prior to the writing of *The Fourteen of Consolation* that may have immediately spurred on its creation, there are likely two. The first is the date August 8 which is when the group of saints would be honored with a votive mass.[107] This was instituted as early as 1483 in the Cracow Missal by Pope Nicholas V.[108] As it is known Luther began work on *The Fourteen of Consolation* in August 1519,[109] as that is when Frederick the Wise fell ill (see below), it appears the date of August 8 influenced Luther. It is possible that Luther was reminded of the Fourteen Holy Helpers by the celebration of this votive mass, giving him the idea to replace them with true consolation in his pastoral piece prompted by Spalatin.

The second possible *impetus* for the structure of *The Fourteen of Consolation* is the first published account of what happened at the pilgrimage site in Upper Franconia. This work was first printed at Nueremberg in 1519 by Jobsten Guttknecht.[110] Prior to this document there was only oral tradition and the site itself to ground the tale. Although the date when Guttknecht's printing was completed is not certain, it is probable that it was distributed before work on *The Fourteen of Consolation* began, meaning Luther may have come across it by early August 1519, creating another incentive for Luther to attack the saints' veneration.

The Work and Its Timing

On September 22, 1519 Luther sent the manuscript of *The Fourteen of Consolation* to Spalatin for him create a free German translation from as "Frederick could read little Latin."[111] The following is the letter translated in whole.

> Greeting. My Fourteen finally comes to you, my Spalatin; it is true they are tardy, yet hardly having weathered the storms of my busyness, so that you may translate [the work] freely, and offer [it] to the most illustrious prince of ours; and, if it seems good, it is permitted to also translate the prefatory letter.[112] For things had begun to appear insignificant to me for it to be dedicated by a double epistolary dedication like an *ampulla*.[113] The responsibility will be yours.

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[97] Weber, *op. cit.*, 29
[98] Oesterreicher, Paul *Geschichte der Herrschaft, Banz*, Part II, (Bamberg: 1833), cci
[99] Ruderich, *op. cit.*, 30, n. 180 cites "Archiv des Erzbistums Bamberg, I Band, Nummer 298, Produkt 2 (Inventar 1525 Jun. 23)." He includes the text of this document in an appendix.
[100] Weber, *op. cit.*, 29
[101] Ruderich, *op. cit.*, 31, n. 192
[102] Weber, *op. cit.*, 29
[103] WA 18, (279) 291-334 | PE 4, (203) 210-244 | AE (3) 8-43. These latter two editions include the text of the Twelve Articles.
[104] PE 4, (186) 188-193 | AE 46, (46) 49-55 | WA 18, 344-361
[105] PE 4, (255) 259-281| AE 46 (57) 63-85 | WA 18, (375) 384-401
[106] PE 4, 259 | AE 34, (4) 9-61 | WA 30^{II}, (237) 268-356
[107] Benedictine Monks, *The Book of Saints* (New York: The MacMillian Co., 1947), 241
[108] www.newliturgicalmovement.org/2024/08/the-feast-of-fourteen-holy-helpers.html
[109] AE 42, 120
[110] There is suspected to be no surviving copies of this printing. However, various other reprints of the story were made. These are listed on pp. 3-4 of *Vierzehnheiligen in Frankenthal* by Heinrich Weber, Bamberg, 1884
[111] Smith, *Luther's Correspondence*, 46, n. 1
[112] See the Dedicatory Epistle below. Both letters were sent together to Spalatin on Sept. 22 (St.L 21a, col. 184, n. 1).
[113] A pun. An *ampulla* is a double-handled vessel but can also

Fig. 16: Detail of the general map of Germany focusing on the contemporary locations visited by Frederick and Luther. (Base map courtesy of Lencer and Nord-Nord West. CC BY-SA 3.0. Red dots marking the locations of Torgau, Altenberg, and Vierzehnheiligen *with their respective text have been added. The original map has been cropped to fit the present work.)*

In tandem I send my irrational Galatians, seasoned with much salt, which Lotther of Leipzig sent to be presented to you, as you will see. "Wildgoat" Emser[114] is not yet through. To you and Schart it will be fashioned sufficiently;[115] soon it may be permitted to breathe. Something will be produced spontaneously (and I know not what) in the approval of Rebeus.

The bearer of this letter petitions [me], so that on behalf of him I would write to the Prince, by which permission may be procured for him to practice the baking craft at Wittenberg. For they forbid (I hear) bakers that are the son of a man who once was a bath-attendant. So scrupulous is the nobility of workmen. Truly, lest I would be troublesome, I ask the petition to be made by your speech, and in my name (if you want).

But whoa! I had nearly forgot: I would like to see the original copy of the Fourteen again after it serves its purpose. For by these very trifles I look forward to consoling myself nor are the thoughts I wrote down always before me. Similarly, by this reasoning, their richer words will evade me. Farewell, and I commend myself to the prince. Wittenberg, St. Maurice's Day [September 22], 1519

Brother Martin Luther, Augustinian.[116]

The timing of the completion and translation of *The Fourteen of Consolation* has been a puzzle for past editors of Luther's works. The question has always been Did Luther's consolation reach Frederick the Wise in time? Some contextual chronology is necessary to attempt to gain some clarity on this matter.

Upon the death of Maximilian I on January 12, 1519, a new Holy Roman Emperor had to be elected. The electors made their way to Frankfurt am Main. Frederick the Wise, a member of their party, chose to travel by ship and Spalatin was in attendance on him.[117] Charles of Spain was chosen by the seven electors[118] to be Holy Roman Emperor on June 28, 1519.[119]

In attendance on Frederick during the election was not

mean "bombast".

[114] i.e. Jerome Emser (1477-1527). AE 39, 107-109.

[115] i.e. Luther's *Sermon on Preparing to Die* (AE 42 [96] 99-115)

[116] Translated from *Dr. Martin Luthers Briefe* by Wilhelm de Wette, Berlin: 1825, I, 335-336. Parallel to WA Br. 1, 508-509. This volume of the Weimar Edition is still under copyright and not accessible online, preventing use of its notes.

[117] DRA II, 2, n. 4. St.L 10, col. 1162

[118] The seven electors were: (1) Albert of Brandenburg, Elector of Mainz; (2) Richard von Greiffenklau zu Vollrads, Elector of Trier; (3) Hermann of Wied, Elector of Cologne; (4) Louis I, King of Bohemia, who was under the guardianship of Sigismund I, King of Poland; (5) Louis V, Elector of Electoral Palatinate; (6) Frederick III, Elector of Saxony; and (7) Joachim I Nestor, Elector of Brandenburg.

[119] Schweibert, *op. cit.*, 42

Fig. 17: A photograph of the back of the Hartenfels Castle in Torgau with the River Elbe in view. (Photo by Wikimedia Commons user Kora27. CC BY-SA 4.0)

only his court chaplain Spalatin but also the same unnamed son who Francis I offered to educate.[120] This son is said to have rushed to Hoest with others to announce the results of the election.

Then Frederick the Wise, concerned by the prevalence of death in the plagued city, which he expressed as early as June 17, left on the morning of July 4 by ship.[121] This was before the negotiations were completely finished and as one of the first electors to do so. Just a day earlier he buried his chamberlain who had passed away from the rampant illness in the city.[122] By July 12 Frederick was expected to arrive any day in Coburg.[123] It was here he sent Fabian von Feilitzsch on June 27 from Frankfurt with his horses and attendants.[124] By July 20 Frederick likely had arrived in Altenburg, as Luther wrote to Spalatin on this date (see below). Thence he made his way to his residence in Torgau, arriving between July 25 and August 3 (see below), and is thought to have fallen ill in August. In all, Frederick's return journey, which is said to have confined him to bed, took at least three weeks.[125]

However, it may have been that Frederick was under the weather well before this period and his illness only progressed sufficiently in August for a worried Spalatin to reach out to Luther. Whenever Spalatin began his count of eight weeks (see above) it would have had to have been

Fig. 18: A photograph from the courtyard of Hartenfels *Castle of* Großer Wendelstein*, the prominent spiral staircase admired for its lack of a central column. (Photo by Wikimedia Commons user Bybbisch94-Christian Gebhardt. CC BY-SA 4.0)*

some time in August at the latest considering that Luther references the day of the Beheading of Joh the Baptist.[126] A letter from Albrecht of Brandenburg[127] to Frederick the Wise from Aschaffenburg dated August 12, 1519 seems to have called off a meeting agreed upon in Frankfurt for mid-September at Halle because of Frederick's illness.[128] This would appear support the American Edition's unique assertion of "early August" for when Luther began his composition of the *Tessaradecas Consolatoria*.

Because Spalatin's count of eight weeks almost certainly began no later than August 12, which is likely too late, Frederick the Wise would have recovered from his illness by October 7, 1519 by the Julian Calendar.[129]

Similarly, the hard limit of August 12 also would mean that by September 22, when Luther sent the *Tessaradecas Consolatoria* to Spalatin, Frederick would have already suffered for at least forty-one days, just a day shy of six weeks. This timeline surely makes Luther appear inconsiderate; however, his letter of September 22 has always been taken to refer to the entire *Tessaradecas Consolatoria* (i.e. the whole work was sent at once), and the language Luther uses supports this view (e.g. Why translate a prefatory letter after the rest of the work?). The

[120] DRA I, 47, n. 3
[121] Wrede, Adolf, ed., *Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Kaiser Karl V.*, vol. II (Gotha, 1896), 2-3. Henceforth abbreviated 'DRA II'.
DRA I, 860
[122] DRA II, 2
[123] DRA I, 860-1, n. 4
[124] DRA I, 855, n. 1
[125] From July 4 to at least July 25.
[126] August 29 (AE 42, 120; PE 1, 105; and WA 6, 99). Luther writes in Part I, chapter vi: "Does not the example of St. John Baptist, whom we commemorate on this day as beheaded by Herod, shame and amaze us all?" The American Edition is unique in stating the *Tessaradecas Consolatoria* was begun in "early August" instead of PE's "within the months of August and September." WA gives the month of August generally as the time the composition began.
[127] Albrecht of Brandenburg (1490-1545) was the Elector of Mainz and a voting member at the 1519 Imperial Diet with Frederick the Wise.
[128] DRA II, 10, n. 1
[129] Eight weeks = 56 days. Nineteen of these would have been in August, thirty in September, and seven in October.

time it took to translate the work also seems to suggest that Spalatin did not begin the German version until around September 22 (see below).

In dissonance with this view is Luther's mention of the Day of the Beheading of John the Baptist (August 29): "Does not the example of St. John Baptist, whom we commemorate on this day as beheaded by Herod, shame and amaze us all!" (Part I, chapter vi) While this phrase has always been used to date the act of composition, no comment has been made as to how out of place it would be to Frederick's ears in late September, which would be the absolute earliest it could have reached the Elector considering Spalatin's necessary role as translator. Luther's mention of August 29, given as "this day", has a feel much closer to a letter that would have been received rather expediently. Furthermore, Luther answered Spalatin's question on the translation of the title of the work into German on November 29.[130] This appears to be an incredibly late time to have begun thinking about the translation of the title and yet Luther makes no remark of its tardiness. Could it have been that Luther sent his *Tessaradecas Consolatoria* in installments to Frederick which were then translated piecemeal? Or is this simply a remnant of an earlier edition reconstructed in 1535 by Luther himself?

In addition, never mentioned is Spalatin's contextualization of this period of illness in 1519 as a particularly bad episode of ailments the Elector already suffered from all his life. He gives high fevers, gout, and kidney stone colic as common illnesses that were chronically known by the Elector.[131] Could it have been that Frederick's illness was at its worst around August 12, and eased into a more typical episode for him? This would help explain the apparently lax timing of Luther's writing, even taking into consideration how busy he was in this critical period of the Reformation.[132] This easing in illness would also help to explain how the Elector was still able to keep up his correspondence during this time when supposedly everyone constantly feared for his life. A non-exhaustive list of Frederick's correspondence during this time is given here out of consideration for the difficulty English speakers have in gaining access to his letters as well as for their relevance to the present discussion (See Fig. 16):

1. July 20. Luther from Wittenberg to Spalatin, likely in Altenburg.[133]
2. July 24. Frederick from Altenburg to Johann Eck[134].[135]
3. July 25. Frederick from Altenburg to Albrecht of Mainz.[136]
4. July 28. Ziegler from Nördlingen to Frederick.[137]
5. July 29. Joachim, Elector of Brandenburg, to Frederick.[138]
6. July 31. Carlstadt from Wittenberg to Frederick.[139]
7. August 3. Frederick from Torgau to Joachim, Elector of Brandenburg.[140]
8. August 3. Elector Albrecht from Aschaffenburg to Frederick.[141]
9. August 12. Albrecht from Aschaffenburg to Frederick.[142]
10. August 14. Count Heinrich von Nassau from Diest to Frederick.[143]
11. August 15. Ziegler from Nördlingen to Frederick.[144]
12. August 18. Carlstadt and Luther from Wittenberg to Frederick.[145]
13. August 18. Accompanying letter to that of the same date. Carlstadt and Luther from Wittenberg to Frederick.
14. August 21. Frederick from Torgau to Albrecht.[146]
15. August 22. Frederick from Torgau to Zieler.[147]
16. August 27. Albrecht of Mainz from Halle to Frederick.[148]
17. August 31. Frederick from Torgau to Count Heinrich von Nassau[149]

[130] St.L 21a, col. 208
[131] Spalatin, *op. cit.*, 36
[132] In a letter to Spalatin dated to before August 18 Luther asks that Spalatin pray for him "the most occupied sinner" (*ora pro me occupatissimo peccatore*) (St.L 21a col. 180| EA, Briefwechsel 2, 125).
[133] St.L 15, col. 1162. Altenburg is also written as "Aldenburg", chiefly in DRA.
[134] Johann Eck (1486-1543) was a prominent counter-reformer and the opponent of Luther at the Leipzig Debate, which began in late June 1519.
[135] St.L, 15, col. 1289
[136] DRA II, 5, n. 2
[137] DRA II, 11, n. 2
[138] DRA II, 5, n. 2
[139] St.L 15, col. 1290
[140] DRA II, n. 2
[141] DRA II, 5-6, n. 2
[142] DRA II, 10, n. 1
[143] DRA II, 4, n. 2
[144] DRA II, 6, n. 1
[145] St.L 15, col. 1291
[146] DRA II, 5-6, n. 2
[147] DRA II, 5, n. 2
[148] DRA II, 3, n. 1
[149] DRA II, 9-10, n. 1

18. August 31. Count Heinrich von Nassau from Diest to Frederick.[150]
19. August 31. Frederick from Torgau to Count Heinrich von Nassau.[151]
20. September 3. Frederick from Torgau to Ziegler.[152]
21. Before September 6. Duke George of Saxony to Frederick.[153]
22. September 22. Luther from Wittenberg to Spalatin.[154]
23. September 24. Charles V *via* Brunner to Frederick.[155]
24. September 26. Council of Naumburg to Frederick and Duke John.[156]
25. September 30. Frederick from Lochau to Count Heinrich von Nassau.[157]
26. September 30. Frederick from Lochau to Spalatin.[158]
27. October 1. Luther from Wittenberg to Frederick.[159]
28. October 10. Karl von Miltitz[160] to Frederick.[161]
29. October 12. Frederick from Lochau to Miltitz.[162]
30. October 12. Frederick from Lochau to Eck.[163]
31. October 25. Frederick from Lochau to Count Heinrich von Nassau.

The above list is of course cannot claim to be entirely representative of the Elector's activity during this period, however, a more able Frederick arises from a supposed bed-ridden state when considering the volume of letters that continued to be exchanged before, during, and after his residency in Torgau. Naturally, the most consequential matters have been preserved for posterity, skewing the data. This may mean that Frederick the Wise only kept up his most important correspondence during this time of illness: the aftermaths of both the Imperial Diet and the Leipzig Debate. Alternatively, it may be that such activity is only a portion of the letters exchanged in this period.

The noticeable gap between September 6 and 22 may have been a period when the Elector's illness picked up again after subsiding from its start in early August. It may have been that Luther delayed prioritizing the work in August while the Elector was only moderately ill and then picked up the pace sometime around September when possibly the court "feared for his life." The matter still remains unclear.

However one approaches the issue of the timing of *The Fourteen of Consolation*, it is difficult to see them arriving to the Elector punctually. Even with a Frederick the Wise who had expertise in his chronic illness and who was able to maintain important correspondence, there remains the fact that he likely suffered for six weeks without the requested consolation from Luther. Two factors must be taken into account that the Lutheran may not like to admit: Frederick already had both a court chaplain and physicians to provide comfort and healing. Luther's work was merely an additional request from Spalatin that barely survived more pressing contemporary imperial matters that simply could not and would not wait.

The Language of the Work

Why write a consolatory piece in Latin to one who could not read Latin? While the following points are offered mostly out of the present author's reasoning, they are presented to recognize this natural question which has otherwise gone unaddressed.

1. Luther likely felt more comfortable in Latin as an author than he did in German.[164] The majority of Luther's works that have survived were in Latin by this time as reference to the Weimar Edition shows, demonstrating it as the dominant choice. In other words, one would likely need to justify his use of German rather than that of Latin. In addition, scholarly and theological works were naturally written in Latin, and, while *The Fourteen of Consolation* were not intended to be distributed at first, and therefore did not inherently require the *lingua franca*, they occasionally utilize thorough

[150] DRA II, 5-6, n. 2
[151] DRA II, 10
[152] DRA II, 2, n. 2
[153] Found digitally at "*Briefe und Akten zur Kirchenolitik: Freidrichs des Weisen und Johanns Beständigen 1513 bis 1535*", No. 765 https://bakfj.sawleipzig.de/doc/440?query_id=68cb465b4a4b7
[154] St.L 21a, col. 184
[155] DRA II, 9, n. 1
[156] Found digitally at "*Briefe und Akten zur Kirchenolitik* etc.", No. 768
[157] DRA II, 9, n. 1
[158] St.L 15, col. 750
[159] St.L 15, col. 751
[160] Karl von Miltitz (*ca.* 1490-1529) was a self-interested papal representative to Frederick the Wise sent to influence the outcome of the 1519 Imperial Diet through negations.
[161] St.L 15, col. 753
[162] St.L 15, col. 754
[163] St.L 21a, col. 187
[164] I wish to express my thanks to H. Greer for this suggestion.

theology, a use Latin had been fashioned to over centuries. In these instances Latin would have allowed Luther to convey what he wished to express with ease and speed.

2. It was quicker for Luther to write in Latin. Many of Luther's sources were in Latin, including not only the Bible,[165] but the works of Augustine and the classical sources he drew from.[166] As such, if Luther were to have written in German, instead of copying the text over, he would have had the additional steps of translating and interpreting the material. Because time was of the essence, as shown above, it would make sense for Luther to try to remove as many steps as possible between beginning and completing the consolatory work, passing the grunt work of translation to Spalatin. The thinking may have been that Spalatin had the time to devote to translating which Luther simply could not spare.
3. Could Luther's choice of Latin have been a matter of respect? This appears unlikely as Luther did not solely write to the Elector in Latin. For example, Luther's letter to Frederick from around November 6, 1517 is in German.[167] Therefore, clearly it was not out of the question for Luther to address the Elector directly in German. One must conclude that it was the nature of the work or its temporal context that prompted Luther to compose *The Fourteen of Consolation* in Latin.

Luther's Opinion of Frederick

Despite the personal nature of *The Fourteen of Consolation*, Luther would not meet Frederick face-to-face until 1521 at the Diet of Worms.[168] And even at this time Frederick maintained a neutral judicial attitude. "In confidential letters he [Frederick] showed a cordial interest in the persecuted monk, but at the diet he took great pains not to show it and to avoid all intercourse with him."[169] A picture of how deep Luther's knowledge of Frederick's personal and political life went then is detailed in *The Fourteen of Consolation*.

Despite this severance between them, while lecturing on the epistle to the Romans in the summer of 1516 Luther spoke favorably of Frederick with what may be called constructive criticism:

> And, similarly, if only someone would have exhorted Pope Julius: "Most Holy Father, the Roman Church is now not of such a holiness that it deserves not greater assault than that harshness which the Venetians make unto her. Stay calm; it is the will of God." But then he said: "No, no. We will pursue justice."[170] And if only someone exhorted in the same way our Bishop of Brandenburg:[171] "Revered Father, often you too have sinned in all sorts of ways. Put up with, I beg you, this injustice particularly." Yet you, Prince Frederick, have thus far been preserved by a good angel, but if only you were aware of it! How many are the injustices you have been attacked by! With what just causes you would have been able to go to war! You suffered and kept calm, I know not whether by a simple confession of sin or rather by a present fear of injury.[172]
>
> Wherefore, now by amazing stupidity the canonical hours have been founded; of course, from the superstition that the donors do not take interest in what is prayed, but only to have much chanted, and, nevertheless, the donors wish that they would pray for them. However, the donors themselves prescribe the prayer, as if it were in their power to buy prayer. How much better they would give if they gave freely, so that the prayer for them was prayed when the one praying would be able to! But [they say] they follow the ancient foundations. I respond that they are not, because predecessors sought the glory of God in their prayers, not such advantage of prayer. For here thus sounds the words of our foundation: "for the salvation of our souls." Surely God would not be able to know on account of what you would give? Or was he not able to repay you sufficiently, if you were to have given purely on account of Him, and if you were not to prescribe to Him on behalf of what you wished to give and were not to blow your trumpet before men? What if you lie?

[165] Luther memorized the Psalms in Latin as a boy. Schweibert, *op. cit.* 111-112

[166] The original text of nonbiblical sources is included in the notes below. One may consult these for proof of the above statement.

[167] WA Br. 1, 119 | St.L 21a, col. 77 | EA 53, 1

[168] Smith, *op cit.*, p. 45, n. 2

[169] Jackson, *op. cit.*, vol. 4, 375-377

[170] It is thought that Luther is referring here to Pope Julius II's last battles against the Venetians.

[171] Hieronymus Schulz/Scultetus (*ca.* 1460 - 1522) was the chancellor to the Joachim I Nestor, Elector of Brandenburg.

[172] On Rom. 12:2. The translation is mine. From Ficker, Johannes *Anfänge reformatorischer Bibelauslegung*, I Band: Luthers Vorlesung über den Römerbrief 1515-1516, Zweiter Teil: Die Scholien (Leipzig: Theodor Weicher, 1908), 272-3. | WA 56, 448 | AE 25, 440-1.

> And do it for the glory of God not at all? Let God grant that I have become a false prophet; I fear that this monastery may nevertheless produce great misery for her miserable founder, and, similarly, the Church of All Saints.[173]

The "miserable founder" is here Frederick the Wise. From 1513 to 1514 he made many contributions for a large-scale building program for the monastery and church.[174] He also gave considerably to and established many foundations for the Church of All Saints, with a remarkable amount in 1514.[175] Earlier, in 1506, Frederick the Wise had founded a foundation to sing the hours in the collegiate church.[176]

Continuing with Luther's statements in his first lectures on Romans:

> Similarly, the Prince and the Bishop vie with one another over relics. Now one wishes that the other would concede, yet each one, continuing in displays of good works, does not yield to the other.[177]

In late 1515 and early 1516 many grand translations and presentations of relics had occurred at Halle where the Bishop Albert of Brandenburg stored his collection (see below).[178] By the time of these lectures, the summer of 1516, Luther would have certainly heard about this commotion.

Luther's View of the Saints and Suffering

Luther's view of the saints had undergone development by 1519 and would continue to be revised after the writing of *The Fourteen of Consolation*, making this early work of his an informative freeze-frame. On December 31, 1517, Luther responded to a request from Spalatin for theses arguing for the superstitious nature of the worship of saints for temporal goods. In this letter matters that will later reappear centrally in *The Fourteen of Consolation* were discussed; therefore, it is presented in whole. Note not only comments on some of the saints who belong to the Fourteen Holy Helpers but also the argument from pastoral patience to be flexible to those who are weak in the Faith.

> "Greeting. You ask me, excellent Spalatin, what I would think of publishing some theses asserting that the worship of the saints for temporal goods is superstitious. It was never my idea, Spalatin, to call the veneration of the saints superstitious, even when they are invoked for the most worldly causes. For this is what our neighbors the Beghards of Bohemia think. At least it is better to pray God through his saints for anything whatever, seeing that every gift is of God, than to seek it, as some do, from the devil through magicians and wizards. But I would say that it is superstitious, or rather impious and perverse, to pray God and the saints for temporal goods exclusively, and not rather for the goods of the soul and salvation and the will of God, as though forgetful or doubtful of his words: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto you." Indeed Christ teaches us to despise our vile bodies and their needs. If it is lawful to seek such things, it is only permitted to those who are of imperfect faith and live rather under Moses than under Christ. Wherefore such worship of the saints is a thing to be tolerated only on account of the weak, not to be extolled as a thing worthy of a Christian life. Think a moment, whether any saint is famous among the people for giving chastity, patience, humility, faith, hope, charity and other spiritual goods. These things are not sought, nor have we any saints who, for the sake of such things, have crowds of worshippers, churches and special services. St. Lawrence is worshipped for fire, Sebastian for the plague, Martin and even that unknown St. Roch on account of poverty, St. Anna with her son-in-law and the blessed Virgin for many things, St. Valentine for epilepsy, Job for the French itch; and thus Scholastica, Barbara, Catharine, Apollonia, in short, all famous saints are famous for some temporal goods, and so famous that they are preferred to the apostles, though they would be little esteemed if no one needed temporal goods nor cared for them. Why should we not invoke St. Paul to bring our minds out of the ignorance of Christ, just as we do St. Christopher, for I know not what nocturnal folly? Such worshippers I say, if they are weak, are to be tolerated, and gradually instructed to know better, condemn corporal and seek

[173] On Rom. 12:12. Translation mine. From Ficker, *op. cit.*, 291. | WA 56, 468-9 | AE 25, 461.
[174] WA 56, 469, n. 12
[175] WA 56, 456-7, n. 27
[176] Grohmann, Johann Christian August *Annalen der Universität zu Wittenberg*, Erster Theil (Meissen: 1801), 62
[177] On Rom. 13:10. Translated from Ficker, *op cit.* 305. | WA 56, 483-4 | AE 25, 476.
[178] Ficker, *op. cit.*, 305, n. 1

> spiritual blessings, so that we may not always be children under Moses, but may at last lay hold on Christ a little. If the worshippers are of better faith they are to be convinced that they seek unworthy things. It is a mistake to foster the worship of the saints by the fears of evil and desire for temporal goods. But this is not to be taught to all at all times, but only to the little ones and to the weak; the other should be taught to ask for just the contrary things, punishments, diseases, scourges, crosses and divers torments, as he says: "Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart." [Ps. 26:2] . . . Thus the Lord's prayer teaches us to seek for spiritual gifts in the first three petitions, and for the things of God, and afterward for our own. . . .
>
> Brother Martin Eleutherius[179], Augustinian."[180]

While Luther never declares Frederick the Wise of feeble faith, one can see the patient toleration of his model medieval Catholicism as expressed in the above letter in *The Fourteen of Consolation*. Luther does not rip the Fourteen Holy Helpers away from Frederick but instead replaces them with true consolation. This consolation is one that is not interested in the temporal gain that compromises ministry. Luther must have been especially aware of using kid gloves as Frederick formed his faith by the deep piety expressed to the Fourteen as discussed in the above sections. Beautifully, however, the Fourteen of Luther are not focused on temporal gain but on eternity, retaining his epistolary sentiment. Indeed, *The Fourteen of Consolation* could be considered a hyper-charged form of pastoral counsel regarding the worship of saints. There is movement away from a purely temporal view of the saints to a focus on eternity with a Christian understanding of suffering.

In late February 1519, only a little while before the composition of *The Fourteen of Consolation*, Luther released his brief *apologia vernacula*,[181] in which he once again took on the challenge of addressing the worship of saints. Schweibert summarizes Luther's comments on saint worship as follows: "As to the reality of miracles at the graves of saints there can be no doubt, but saints are mere intercessors with no power of their own, and all honor must be given to God for such miracles. ... As for the commands of the Church, such as fasting and the observance of saints' days, these outward observances were less important than true inward piety."[182]

After the *Fourteen of Consolation* were sent off to Spalatin, Luther continued to contemplate the relationship between saints and suffering, especially under what conditions it was appropriate to flee or seek God's punishment. Scholars such as Andrew Towner have speculated what revisions Luther may have made in 1535 if he were to have not let his work stand as a demonstration of his progress.[183] Regarding Luther's theology of seeking suffering, Towner suggests that in light of Luther's 1527 work *Whether One may Flee from a Deadly Plague*,[184] he would have added clarifications to his unconditional endorsement of suffering and its benefits.[185] In this work Luther writes that quietly awaiting God's punishment through the invading Turk's sword is for those who are strong in faith; they should not condemn those who do flee for safety on account of weak faith. However, Luther does not wish for such non-resistance to be taken to such an extreme that "deliver us from evil, Amen" is removed from the Lord's Prayer. One of such an attitude would pose questions such as: "If we should bear God's punishments, why go inside when freezing weather comes and warm ourselves by the fire? Shouldn't we stand out in the snow and wait for warmer weather or death?"[186]

Ultimately, in 1527 Luther declares that a Christian cannot outrun God's will.[187] In addition, a distinction is made between those who feel they are bound to help their neighbor during a crisis and those who take flight, but both commend themselves into God's hands. However, when it is our neighbor undergoing a punishment from God, love compels us to take some amount of risk and save the drowning man, dowse the raging fire, etc.[188]

It is true that in the hypothetical revised edition of *The Fourteen of Consolation* there may have been greater explanation of to what degree one should face suffering and why, but Luther would not have had to have looked back as recently as 1527. Similar sentiments from Luther

[179] "From the Greek [adjective] ἐλεύθερος, meaning free. The custom of turning their names into Latin or Greek was very prevalent among humanists. It has often been noticed that Luther adopted this name immediately after publishing his Theses on Indulgences, though he later dropped it…" (Smith, *op. cit.*, 64)
[180] Smith, *op. cit.*, 66-8
[181] WA 2, (66) 69-73
[182] Schweibert, *op. cit.*, 382-3.
[183] Towner, Andrew "Martin Luther, Reformer Pastor: The Pastoral Theology of the *Tessaradecas Consolatoria*"
[184] WA 23, (323) 339-379 | AE 43, 113-138
[185] Towner, *op. cit.*, p. 39
[186] AE 43, 124
[187] AE 43, 125. One is reminded of Jonah.
[188] AE 43, 125.

on fleeing plagues and the preservation of bodily health are documented in a letter to Martin Seligmann dated October 14, 1519:

> "Greeting. I have received your letter with the questions, excellent Sir, and I greatly approve what you say about fraternal charity and bearing the scourge of God strongly. Would that all Christians were such as those you here describe. But what shall we do if they are not all equal to all things?[189] Ought we not to bear with and support the weak, as Romans XV. teaches? [Rom. 14:1, 15:1] What you say about the duty of bearing one another's burdens [Gal. 6:1] seems to me rather to pertain to those against whom you quoted it. For those who flee death are weak, rather than those who await it. Moreover, famine and war are doubtless plagues sent by God as much as is pestilence, as is said frequently by the Prophets.[190] ...
>
> Wherefore, in my opinion, all men should be exhorted to bear the hand of the Lord with fortitude, but they should not be forced to do so, or called sinners if they do not, or, if they are called sinners, yet they ought to be borne as weaker brethren. Did not Christ bear with the apostles when, fearing death, they woke him up, [Matt. 8:25f.] and did he not bear with the infirmity of Peter, [Matt. 14:21] although he reproached him for fearing to walk on the sea? If the pestilence and all other scourges of God are to be borne passively, it follows that we have no right to pray the saints of God for bodily health. Then let us remove all physicians and apothecaries, since we are not allowed to seek through them an escape from or remedy of the scourge of God, although even infirmity is a scourge of God. But the divine goodness provides such things for the weak in faith.
>
> But the perfect, who spontaneously seek death, have no need of these things. For when the Church prays to be delivered from the plague, lightning and tempest, she does not pray, as it were, for the weak, in trying to avert the scourges of wrath. It would be an evil prayer, were it not allowable to flee from, repel and shun, as far as possible, the scourge of God. But when a man, of fraternal love, perseveres in these as in other ills, his virtue is perfect and very praiseworthy, and when necessary, is even commanded, as love to one's neighbor. And it is necessary when there is no one else to go to those who are dying of the pestilence, or to serve the sick. For I am sure that the priest who has the cure of souls may not flee or appoint a substitute.
>
> On this matter read the learned epistle of Augustine to Honoratus, which is found in the eleventh part of his legend written by Possidonius, towards the end.[191] He teaches that the shepherd must be with the sheep of Christ, and lay down his life for them, [John 10:12] as one whom it behooves to be perfect. Wherefore let us who are strong bear the infirmities of the weak, [Rom. 15:1] and let us give them permission to flee and save their bodies, even if we do not praise them for it. Take it in good part that I write briefly. Commend me to Jonas Kammerer, and please all pray for me, a sinner. I also desire to be well in body, and I despise the barkings of my enemies. Farewell in Christ.
>
> Brother Martin Luther."[192]

In this letter written just under a month after *The Fourteen of Consolation* were sent to Spalatin is found a startling resemblance to his later 1527 work. There is a distinction between the strong and weak in faith, staying despite danger to enact God's love to a neighbor, and mention of greeting suffering passively. Did Luther only think to add conditions on accepting suffering after *The Fourteen of Consolation* was sent off? If this was so, wouldn't Luther have sent a letter after the fact to inform Spalatin of his correction? Was it Seligmann's letter that served as an *impetus* just a little too late? Or, as *The Fourteen of Consolation* was a private piece written for pastoral care, did Luther tailor his words to meet Frederick's personal circumstances? The last mentioned appears to be the most likely. Afterall, flight was not an option for a man already critically ill, so why mention it? Taking Luther's example of the neighbor's burning house, such a response would be equivalent to explaining ways the fire could have been prevented while passing buckets of water. It simply is not helpful in the moment. One would be a comforter of Job.

In fact, the conundrum of whether it was acceptable for a pastor to flee a plague was not a new issue to Luther in 1519, further supporting this claim. As early as October 26, 1516 he sent a letter to Johann Lang personally deciding to not flee the ongoing plague, stating that it was

[189] Virgil's "*non omnia possumus omnes*"
[190] The four scourges (Ezek. 14:21) are later equated in *Whether One may Flee from a Deadly Plague* (AE 43, 124).
[191] Possidonius, *De vita Augustini*, ch. 30. For both the Latin text and an English translation see Herbert T. Weiskotten's *Sancti Augustini Vita Scripta a Possidio Episcopo* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1919) pp. 119-141.
[192] Smith, *op. cit.*, 225-6.

not because he does not fear death, which St. Paul is capable of, but from obedience.[193]

Luther's View on Relics and Frederick the Wise's Extensive Collection at Wittenberg

The questions surrounding suffering and the invocation of saints naturally correspond to Luther's contemplation of the role of relics in a Christian's life. In 1516 Luther was already forming his view of the Cross and its relics, which would later make its way into his piece for the Elector. In a letter dated April 15 of this same year to George Leiffer meant for his comfort while he was in a period of temptation, Luther wrote:

> The cross of Christ is distributed through the whole world, and each receives his portion. Therefore pray do not cast thy portion from thee, but cherish it as a precious relic, certainly not enshrined in a casket of gold or silver,[194] but in a golden heart filled with loving charity. For, even as the wood of the cross is consecrated through coming in contact with the flesh and blood of Christ, so that henceforth they are esteemed to be the costliest of relics, how much more will the injustice, persecution, and hatred of men, whether it be right or wrong, not through contact with His flesh, but through union with His loving heart and Divine will, which consecrates everything which is in touch with it, thereby transform the curse into a blessing, suffering into glory, and the cross into a crown of joy.[195]

The above passage displays an argument later reused at the time of the composition of *The Fourteen of Consolation*. A belief in the consecration of the Cross just from contact with Christ,[196] making even its splinters relics, is used for encouragement for a more Christian understanding of Christ, turning punishments and curses into blessings. In parallel, in Part I, Chapter vii Luther places relics "consecrated by His touch" below the death of death made by Christ's crucifixion and resurrection.

> Therefore, if you kiss, caress, and embrace, as most sweet relics, consecrated by His touch, the robe of Christ, the vessels, waterpots, and what things soever He touched and used; why will you not the rather caress,

Fig. 19: A woodcut of Schlosskirche *in 1509 by Lucas Cranach the Elder from the Wittenberg Reliquary book. This was where Frederick the Wise's vast collection of relics was held and displayed. (Public domain)*

> embrace, and kiss the pains and evils of this world, disgrace and deat h, which He not only hallowed by His touch, but sprinkled and blessed with His most holy blood, yea, embraced with willing heart, and great constraining love? The more, since in these there are for you far greater merits, rewards, and blessings than in those relics; for in them there is offered to you the victory over death, and hell, and all sins, but in those relics nothing at all. O could we but see the heart of Christ, when, hanging on the Cross, He was so eager to slay death, and hold it up to our contempt! ... For we see that naught of evil befell Him, but only good, in His resurrection.

This call by Luther to a higher understanding of relics

[193] St.L 21a, No. 25, cols. 49-52. A DeepL English translation coordinated by the blog BackToLuther is available on online.
[194] Relics were stored and displayed in reliquaries, often small, ornately- and expensively-decorated boxes.
[195] Currie, Margaret A. *The Letters of Martin Luther* (London: MacMillan and Co., 1908), 7
[196] There are three types of relics: touch (e.g. the cloth Christ was entombed in), True Cross (i.e. the Cross Christ was crucified on), and body (e.g. a finger of a saint).

must have struck that the very core of Frederick the Wise's model Catholic faith as he possessed one of the largest collections of relics in all of Germany. In 1509 he housed 5,005 of them in the Castle Church (Ger. *Schlosskirche*; distinguished from the Town Church. See Fig. 19) at Wittenberg which were accompanied by a catalog from the same year with 108 illustrations by Lucas Cranach.[197] Castle Church, also called All Saints' Church, was still new at this time, consecrated on January 17, 1503, and not completed until 1511. In 1510 a second edition of the *Wittenberger Heiligthumsbuch* was printed by Symphorian Reinhart with 119 illustrations.[198]

Allegedly among Frederick's objects were some of Mary's milk and a piece of the crown of thorns.[199] It is thought that on his pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1493 he purchased many of these items for "large sums" and later on a trip to the Netherlands in 1494.[200] Frederick had also requested from Francis I the translation of some relics from him for his new church. Francis I was amiable but told Frederick there would be a delay until he would be able to return to his own castle in Amboise (Fr. *Château d'Amboise*) where the relics were held.[201]

Frederick also had agents abroad searching for relics. A contact who was a German baron by the name of von Schent resided in Venice and sent items to the Elector.[202] In the summer of 1516 Frederick sent Johann von Staupitz to the Lower Rhine to gather relics.[203] This was a political task to some degree as though Staupitz had secured the permission of the Archbishop of Cologne, after he left many refused to translate the agreed-upon relics. Luther himself writes in a letter of December 14, 1516 to Spalatin of the specific case of the St. Ursula convent and their obstinance.[204]

The entire collection at Castle Church was shown to visitors every year on the Monday after Misericordia Sunday.[205] One hundred days of indulgence were given for each item. In a bull Boniface IX gave a special indulgence for the two days before and after All Saints' Day. [206] This was a rare privilege which echoed the indulgences granted in Assisi for St. Francis. In 1516, Leo X made this particular indulgence 100 years. This appears to be what some sources have in mind when they paint the 100 years as a year-round indulgence for the Castle Church. Of course, in 1516 there were more relics than in 1509, however, if one were to adore the all the items on All Saints' Day, he would have been rewarded with at least 500,500 years of indulgence.[207]

However impressive Frederick's collection of relics may seem, it was surpassed in grandeur by Cardinal Albert of Brandenburg who in Halle had gathered 8,933 body parts and 42 entire bodies of saints.[208] These granted the visitor a total of 39,245,120 years and 220 days of indulgence. It was not only the quantity but also the quality of the relics that made the collection at Halle more impressive. Where Frederick had the remainder of the milk of Virgin Mary[209] Albert had a statue of her with a full bottle of her milk hanging around her neck. [210] Luther criticized this competition between men of power over relics as early as the summer of 1516 when lecturing on Romans 13:10 as already quoted above.

Luther would of course later post the 95 Theses which disputed the "power and efficacy of indulgences."[211] The relation between All Saints' Day and Luther's choice of date for posting the 95 Theses (October 31) was not so the crowds of the following day could see them but because that "was the customary day for the posting of theses" and that on All Saints' all the relics were displayed.[212]

Despite the upset caused by the 95 Theses, in 1520 Frederick's collection had grown to number 19,013 items. [213] However, in 1522, due to the forces of the Reformation, the Wittenberg collection would be

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[197] PE 1, 15-16
A facsimile reproduction of the original 1509 catalog was published in 1884 at Munich under the title *Wittenberger Heiligtumsbuch* and was edited by G. Hirth and is accessible online.
[198] *Wittenberger Heiligthumsbuch* at The British Museum. Museum No. 1911,0708.1
www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1911-0708-1
[199] PE 1, 15-16
[200] Jackson, *op. cit.*, vol. 4, 376
[201] DRA I, 48
[202] Köstlin, Julius *Friedrich der Weise und die Schloßkirche zu Wittenberg* (Wittenberg: 1892), 17
[203] Smith, *op. cit.*, 46-47
Kolde, *Die deutsche Augustiner-Congregation und Johann von Staupitz* (Gotha: 1879), 268
[204] Smith, *op. cit.*, 46-47
[205] i.e. the Monday after the third Sunday of Easter.
Köstlin, *op. cit.*, 23
[206] Köstlin, *op. cit.*, 24
[207] Jackson, *op. cit.*, vol. 4, 376
PE 1, 15-16
[208] Bezold, Friedrich *Geschichte der deutschen Reformation* (Berlin: 1890), 100
[209] Köstlin, *op. cit.*, 21-22
[210] Bezold, *op. cit.*, 100
[211] PE 1, (13) 25-38
[212] PE 1, 15-16
[213] AE 42, 142, n. 23
Jackson, *op. cit.*, vol. 4, 376

displayed for the final time.

After the Work

Spalatin finished his German translation in late November.[214] In fact, as late as November 29 Luther wrote to Spalatin answering the latter's question on how to translate the title into German (see above).[215] He dismissed the matter as insignificant. On December 7 Luther again wrote to Spalatin expressing reservation over whether to publish the *Tessaradecas Consolatoria*.[216] He was particularly hesitant over releasing the Latin text because of its accessibility to the Sophists and how it would be attacked for its teaching of Christ. On December 8 Luther wrote Spalatin saying he wished to send the *Tessaradecas* to Leipzig.[217] On December 18 Luther wrote to Spalatin informing him of the printing of the *Tessaradecas* in both German and in Latin.[218]

In 1525 Luther was summoned to care for Frederick the Wise as he faced death one last time.[219] Yet he was off in the distant Hartz mountains quelling an uprising of the Peasants' War and was unable to make it. Instead Spalatin was left to comfort the Elector alone.

In these intermediate five years Luther gradually deprived everything Frederick held dear of its value,[220] including the saints. Yet it was on his deathbed that Frederick took steps toward a Biblical faith and took the Lord's Supper in both kinds, thereby supposedly signifying an adoption of Evangelical doctrine.[221]

Luther would later preach two sermons at the burial ceremonies of Frederick the Wise. The first was on May 10, 1525, the eve of the burial, on I Thess. 4:13-18.[222] On the morning of the burial, May 11, Luther preached a graveside sermon [223] with the hope that Frederick "received sufficient light from the Gospel to save his soul."[224] Left open was the question whether Frederick, in his model adherence to the forms of Catholic piety, had gone beyond seeking only justice for Luther [225] and formed an evangelical faith of his own.

[214] PE 1, 105 | AE 42, 120
[215] St.L 21a, col. 208
[216] St.L 21a, col. 209
[217] St.L 21a, col. 210
[218] St.L 21a, col. 213
[219] Jackson, *op. cit.*, vol. 4, 375-377
[220] Jackson, *op cit.*, vol. 4, 376
[221] *Ibid.*
[222] WA 17[I], 196-213 | AE 56, 147-154
[223] WA 17[I], 213-227 | AE 56, 154-161
[224] Schweibert, *op cit.*, 369
[225] Jackson, *op. cit.*, vol. 4, 376

Timeline

ca. 1320	The fresco of the Fourteen Holy Helpers at St. Blaise, Regensburg is made.
1346-1349:	The Black Plague ravages the German lands.
1446:	Hermann Leicht has his first two visions in Franconia.
1447:	Leicht has his second two visions.
1448:	The high altar of the first chapel for the Fourteen Holy Helpers is consecrated.
1456:	The first chapel dedicated to the Fourteen Holy Helpers is completed.
1474:	Emperor Frederick III visited the first chapel dedicated to the Fourteen Holy Helpers.
1485:	Emperor Frederick III visited the chapel for a second time.
1493:	Elector Frederick III visits the chapel.
1500:	John the Steadfast married Sophie of Mecklenburg-Schwerin.
1503:	Sophie passes away.
1505:	The altar at St. Mary's in Torgau is in use.
1508:	By this year *The Fourteen Helpers in Need* is completed by Lucas Cranach.
1509:	The altar screen of St. Mary's is completed by Cranach.
ca. 1510	Luther journeys to Rome and likely visits the chapel to the Fourteen Holy Helpers.
1519:	Frederick the Wise falls critically ill and Luther writes *The Fourteen of Consolation* to him. *The Fourteen of Consolation* are published for the public.
1525:	The first chapel dedicated to the *Vierzehnheiligen* is looted and burned in the Peasants' War. Frederick passes away at the age of 62. Luther preaches twice at his funerary ceremonies.

Works Included in This Volume

Careful effort has been taken to reproduce the text of the following works as faithfully as possible. Errors may be present, however. I am alone responsible for these and will correct any as soon as they are brought to my attention.

Tessaradecas Consolatoria pro laborantibus et oneratis, WA 6, (99) 104-134	Public domain in the United States
Tröstliches Büchlein in aller Widerwärtigkeit eines jeglichen christgläubigen Menschen, St.L 10, cols. 1816-1917[226]	Public domain in the United States
The Fourteen of Consolation, PE 1, (103) 109-171	Public domain in the United States
Consolacyon for troubled consciences, 1538	CC0 1.0 Universal
A Right and Comfortable Treatise, 1578	CC0 1.0 Universal

[226] I am appreciative of BackToLuther for providing me with an editable version of this text from an OCR scan.

TESSERADECAS CONSOLATORIA

Luther's Latin

Hunc librum inter initia causae meae scripsi ad optimum Principem Fridericum Saxoniae Ducem, cum aegrotaret graviter, placuit autem multis, ut excuderetur. Sed cum toties recuderetur, ita depravatus et mutilatus est, ut multum verborum desyderem, quae nec ipse divinare possum, qualia fuerint: sententias vero utcumque restitui, sed tales, quales ab initio me puto habuisse. Nec eas nunc mutare aut omare volui, sicut possem. Volo enim hoc libro testimonium ostendere mei profectus et gratificari Antilogistis ut habeant quo suam malitiam exerceant. Mihi satis est, si Christo Domino meo et suis Sanctis placuero: Diabolo et suis squamis invisum esse me, ex auimo laetor et gratias Deo meo ago.

Spalatin's German

English Translation

Prefatory Note[231]

This book was written, early in my career, for that most excellent prince, Frederick, Duke of Saxony, when he was stricken with a dangerous illness; but many desired that it be printed. After passing through various editions it has now become so sadly corrupted and mutilated that many passages are missing, whose original form I myself have clean forgot. However, I have restored the sense of them, as well as I was able, taking care to set down only such views as I held when the work was first written. I did not care to revise them now, as I might well do. For it is my purpose in this book to put forth a public record of my progress,[232] and also to show a kindness to the "Contradictionists,"[233] that they may have whereon to exercise their malice. For me it is enough if I please my Lord Christ and His saints; that I am hated of the devil and his scales,[234] I rejoice with all my heart, and give thanks to God.

[231] PE: Written by Luther for the last edition of 1535.

[232] A similar statement is made in Luther's *Preface to the Complete Works* (1545): "Thou wilt therefore ascribe this my error, or as my opponents venomously call it, this inconsistency of mine, to the time, and to my ignorance and inexperience. At the beginning I was quite alone and without any helpers, and moreover, to tell the truth, unskilled in all these things, and far too unlearned to discuss such high and weighty matters. For it was without any intention, purpose, or will of mine that I fell, quite unexpectedly, into this wrangling and contention. This I take God, the Searcher of hearts, to witness." (PE 1, 11)

[233] PE: *Antilogistae*; the hunters of contradictions and inconsistencies in Luther's writings, such as John Faber, who published, in 1530, his *Antilogiarum Mart. Lutheri Babylonia.*

[234] PE: As over against Christ and the saints in His train, the devil and his followers are represented here, as frequently in Luther, under the figure of a dragon with a scaly tail.

ILLVSTRISSIMO PRINCIPI ET DOMINO DOMINO FRIDERICO, SAXONIAE DVCI, SACRI ROM. IMP. ARCHIMARSCHALCO ET ELECTORI, LANDGRAVIO TVRINGIAE, MARCHIONI MISNAE, DOMINO SVO CLEMENTISSIMO.

Dominus noster Iesus et Salvator noster reliquit mandatum, quod pariter ad omnes Christianos pertinet, ut officia humanitatis vel potius (ut Scriptura vocat) misericodiae opera [Luc. 6:36] afflictis et calamitosis praestemus, [Matth. 25:34 ff.] ut morbo oppressos visitemus, captivos liberare studeamus, et alia eiusmodi proximo nostro faciamus, quibus praesentia mala nonnihil releventur. Atque huius mandati Dominus noster Iesus Christus in se ipso illustrissimum exemplum nobis proposuit, quod propter immensum erga genus humanum amorem ex sinu Patris in nostras miserias et carcerem nostrum, hoc est in carnem et calamitosissimam vitam nostram, se demisit ac nostrorum peccatorum poenam recepit in se, ut nos salvaremur, sicut dicit Esaias cap. 43[:24]. In peccatis tuis fecisti me laborare et in iniquitatibus tuis mihi fecisti negotium &c.

Hoc tam illustre exemplnm si quem non commovet et autoritas divini mandati addita si quem non impellit ad haec charitatis opera praestanda, nae ille merito in novissimo iudicio audiet vocem irati iudicis 'I, maledicte, in ignem aeternum. Fui enim infirmus, et me non visitasti, sed extreme ingratus pro summis benefitiis in te et universum mundum a me impensis ne in levissimis quidem offitiis fratres, Imo me Christum Deum et Salvatorem tuum in fratribus, sublevasti' [Matth. 25:41].

Cum igitur, Illustrissime Princeps, videam tuam dominationem gravi

Zuschrift.

Dem Durchlauchtigsten, Hochgebornen Fürsten und Herrn, Herrn Friedrich, Herzog zu Sachsen, des H. Römischen Reichs Erzmarschall, Churfürsten, und in Landen der Sächsischen Rechte und an Enden in seiner Churfürstl. Gn. Vicariat gehörend Vicarius, Landgraf in Thüringen und Markgrafen zu Meißen, seinem gnädigsten Herrn.

1. Unser allerlieblichster Seligmacher, Durchlauchtigster, Hochgeborner Churfürst und gnädigster Herr, hat uns allen geboten, die Kranken zu besuchen, die Gefangenen ledig zu machen und alle Werke der Barmherzigkeit gegen unsern Nächsten getreulich zu erfüllen; wie denn Christus unser HErr selbst zuvor mit dem Vorbilde seiner wundersamen Liebe, solches zu beweisen und anzuzeigen, aus dem Schooß des allerhöchsten Vaters herabgestiegen ist, sich in unser Gefängniß gesenket, unsere Schwachheit angenommen und in unsern Sünden gedient und gearbeitet hat; wie er sagt Jes. am 43., V. 24.: „Du hast gemacht, daß ich in deinen Sünden gedienet habe, und mir eine Arbeit in deinen Ungerechtigkeiten gegeben." Und wer dies allerlieblichste, holdseligste und freundlichste Vorbild und allerheilwärtigste Gebot verschmäht, wird billig am jüngsten Tage hören, Matth. 25, 41. 43.: „Gehet, ihr Vermaledeiten, in das ewige Feuer. Ich bin schwach oder krank gewesen und ihr habt mich nicht besucht", als einer, der mit der allerbösesten Undankbarkeit verkehrt ist und Christo dem HErrn in seinem Nächsten, auf's wenigste in einem geringen Theil, das nicht erzeigt, das er von unserm HErrn Christo mit so großer Vollkommenheit der Barmherzigkeit empfangen hat.

Dedicatory Epistle[235]

To the Most Illustrious Prince and Lord, Frederick, Duke of Saxony, Arch-Marshal and Elector Of the Holy Roman Empire, Landgrave of Thuringia, Margrave of Meissen, his most gracious Lord.

Our Lord and Saviour Jesus hath left us a commandment, which concerns all Christians alike,—that we should render the duties of humanity, or (as the Scriptures call them) the works of mercy, [Luke 6:36] to such as are afflicted and under calamity; [Matt. 25:34 ff.] that we should visit the sick, endeavor to set free the prisoners, and perform other like acts of kindness to our neighbor, whereby the evils of this present time may in some measure be lightened. And of this command our Lord Jesus Christ hath Himself given us the brightest example, in that, out of infinite love to the race of men. He descended out of the bosom of the Father into our misery and prison-cell, that is, our flesh and life so full of ills, and took upon Him the penalty of our sins, in order that we might be saved; as He saith in Isaiah xliii, "Thou hast made Me to serve with thy sins, and wearied Me with thine iniquities." [Isa. 43:24]

Whoever is not moved by so bright an example, and driven by the authority of the divine command, to show forth such works of mercy, he will deservedly hear, in the last judgment, the voice of the angry Judge saying: "Depart from me, thou cursed, into everlasting fire! For I was sick, and thou didst not visit Me; but, basely ungrateful for the many blessings I bestowed on thee and on all the world, thou wouldest not so much as lift a finger to succor thy brethren, nay Me, Christ,

morbo esse oppressam et simul Christum in te aegrotare, existimavi offitii mei esse, ut aliquo scripto tuam D. visitarem. Neque enim dissimulare possum, quod non audiam vocem Christi ex tuae D. corpore et carne ad me clamantis ac dicentis 'Ecce infirmor hic' Ista enim mala, ut sunt morbi et alia, non nos Christiani, sed ipse Christus Dominus et Salvator noster, in quo vivimus, patitur, sicut manifeste Christus testatur in Euangelio: Quicquid minimo ex meis feceritis, mihi feceritis [Matth. 25:40]. Etsi autem hoc offitium in genere omnibus adversa valetudine laborantibus debeamus, ut eos visitemus et consolemur, magis tamen id debemus domesticis fidei. Nam et Paulus clare distinguit inter alienos et domesticos seu aliqua necessitudine nobiscum coniunctos. Galat. 6[:10].

Sed habeo quoque alias mei offitii rationes. Intelligo enim me tanquam unum ex subditis T.D. una cum reliqua tuorum subditorum multitudine morbo tuae D. afflci debere et una quasi aegrotare, ceu membrum cum capite, in quo omnes nostrae fortunae, omnis incolumitas et foelicitas nostra est posita. Agnoscimus enim tuam D. esse tanquam Naamanum quendam [II Reg. 5:1], per quem Deus salutem hodie dat Germaniae, sicut olim per illum Syriae salutem dedit. Quare etiam totum imperium Romanum in tuam D. unam coniicit oculos, eam veneratur et suspicit tanquam Patrem patriae, tanquam insigne totius imperii, praecipue autem Germanicae nationis ornamentum et praesidium.

Neque autem hoc solum tuae D. debemus, ut et consolemur eam pro viribus et familiariter praesentem casum feramus, sed multo magis ut ad Deum pro valetudine et salute tua interpellemus, id quod summa diligentia et

2. Aus dieser Ursache habe ich mich erstlich unterstanden, E. C. F. G. meinen Dienst und Gebühr dieser Besuchung zu bereiten, darum, daß ich ohne die Schuld und Maale der Undankbarkeit diese Form und Gestalt meines HErrn Christi, das ist, E. C. F. G. Krankheit, in keine Wege kann und mag übergehen, mit welcher GOttes Hand meinen Herrn angegriffen und berührt hat, und kann mich nicht stellen, als hörte ich GOttes Stimme nicht, die mir aus dem Leichnam und Fleisch E. C. F. G. zuschreit und spricht: „Ich bin krank." Denn ein Christenmensch ist nicht krank, wenn er krank ist, sondern Christus, unser HErr und Seligmacher selbst, in welchem der christliche Mensch lebt, Gal, 2, 20., wie denn der HErr Christus selbst sagt, Matth. 25, 40.: „Was ihr meiner Kleinsten einem gethan habt, das habt ihr mir gethan!" Und wiewohl man dies Gebot Christi, unsers HErrn und Seligmachers, die Kranken zu besuchen und trösten, als das allerallgemeinste Gebot gegen alle Menschen halten muß: so muß man es doch mehr in den Verwandten des Glaubens, wie es auch St. Paulus unterscheidet, und am allermeisten in unsern Freunden und Nächsten beweisen, üben und halten. Gal. 6, 10.

3. Zudem, daß ich zusammt allen Leuten als E. C. F. G. in Ihrem Churfürstenthum, Fürstenthümern und Herrschaften unterthan, schuldig bin, nicht allein mit E. C. F. G. ein Mitleiden zu tragen, mit zu kranken und alle E. C. F. G. Beschwerung mit zu ertragen, als mit unserem Haupte, in welchem all unser Heil, Verwaltung und Wohlfahrt steht; wie die heilige Schrift von dem Naeman von Syrien sagt, 2 Kön. 5, 1., daß der HErr durch ihn dem ganzen Königreiche zu Syrien das

thy God and Saviour, in thy brethren." [Matt. 25:41]

Since, then, most noble Prince, I perceive that your Lordship has been smitten with a dangerous malady, and that Christ has thus fallen sick in you, I have counted it my duty to visit your Lordship with a little writing of mine. For I cannot pretend to be deaf to the voice of Christ crying to me out of your Lordship's flesh and blood, "Behold, here am I sick." For such ills as sickness and the like are endured, not by us Christians, but by Christ Himself, our Lord and Saviour, in Whom we live. Even as He plainly testifies in the Gospel, "Whatsoever ye have done unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." [Matt. 25:40] And while we should visit and console all who are afflicted with sickness, yet we owe this duty specially to those who are of the household of faith. For Paul clearly distinguishes between strangers and those of the household, or those who are bound to us by intimate ties, Galatians vi. [Gal. 6:10]

But I have yet other reasons for performing this my duty. For I consider that, as one of your Lordship's subjects, I must needs share in your Lordship's illness, together with the remainder of your many subjects, and suffer with you as a member with the Head, on which all our fortunes, our safety, and our happiness depend. For we recognize in your Lordship another Naaman [2 Kings, 5:1], by whom God is now giving deliverance to Germany, as in times past He gave deliverance to Syria. Wherefore the whole Roman Empire turns its eyes to your Lordship alone, and venerates and receives you as the Father of the Fatherland,[236] and the bright ornament and protector of

[235] PE: Omitted, through an oversight, from the Latin *editio princeps*.

[236] *Pater patriae* was one of the ancient titles used for the Roman emperors which expressed the people's dependency on them as well as their beneficent actions.

studio a tuae D. subditis fieri spero. Atque ego quidem, quem multa tuae D. insignia beneficia ac merita prae reliquis debitorem constituerunt, agnosco hoc a me requiri, ut singulari aliquo officio gratitudinem meam declarem. Quia autem in hac ingenii et fortunarum tenuitate nihil insigne praestare possum, commodum admonuit me D. Georgius Spalatiaus, qui tuae D. a sacris est, ut consolationem aliquam spiritualem instituerem, eamque ad D. tuam transmitterem, Fore enim id offitium tuae D. perquam gratum. Ego igitur nolui moleste amici consilio repugnare, et congessi haec quatuordecim capita tanquam in tabula digesta eisque tessaradecados nomen dedi, ut essent, loco quatuordecim Divorum, quos superstitio nostra omnium malorum depulsores fecit et appellavit. Est autem haec non argentea sed spiritualis tabula, qua non templorum parietes ornandi sed mens pia erigenda ac confirmanda est, ac spero eam in praesenti tuae D. fortuna maxime fore utilem. Habet autem duas partes, quarum prior septem imagines malorum continet, quorum consideratione praesentia incommoda mitigantur, posterior similiter septem imagines bonorum proponit ad eundem usum collectas.

Tua igitur Dominatio hanc meam qualemcunque operam boni consulat et ea sic fruatur, ut diligenti lectione et consideratione harum imaginum nonnihil acquiescat. Ego me T. D. suppliciter commendo.

Subditus

Martinus Luther, D.

Heil und die Seligkeit gegeben hat. Ja, derhalben die ganze Versammlung und Commun des heiligen römischen Reichs und der christlichen Kirche E. C. F. G. dienst-, dank- und liebepflichtig ist, auf die allermänniglich Augen, Gedanken und Herzen Achtung haben als auf einen getreuen Vater des Vaterlandes deutscher Nation und eine einige tröstliche Zuflucht des ganzen heiligen römischen Reichs.

4. Wir sind auch nicht allein berührte unterthänige Dienste E. C. F. G. zu erzeigen schuldig und mit E. C. F. G. ein demüthiges Mitleiden zu haben, sondern auch GOtt den HErrn zu bitten, E. C. F. G. Gesundheit und Leben zu erhalten, uns allen zu Heil, Gut und glückseliger Wohlfahrt; welches ich auch vermuthe und hoffe, daß es von männiglich fleißig und treulich geschieht. Aber ich, der ich mich billig für E. C. F. G. Schuldner aus vielen Ursachen erkennen soll, bekenne, billig zu sein, daß ich E. C. F. G. eine mehrere Unterthänigkeit vor andern erzeige, meine Gebühr und Geziemung zu beweisen. Als ich aber das nach Betrachtung meiner Armuth und Dürstigkeit nicht mochte finden, hat mich endlich mein liebster Freund, Georg Spalatin, E. C. F. G. Kaplan, erinnert, E. C. F. G. eine geistliche Vertröstung, das ist, etwas aus der heiligen Schrift, zu machen und zu überreichen, und mir zugesagt, es würde solche meine Unterthänigkeit E. C. F. G. als einem wundergütigen, sanftmüthigen und holdseligen Fürsten zu gnädigem Gefallen gereichen, mit welchen Worten ich, ermahnt meiner Pflicht, mich unterwunden habe.

5. Derhalben ich diese Tafel, in vierzehn Capitel getheilt, gemacht habe

the whole Empire, but of the German nation in particular.[237]

Nor are we bound only to console your Lordship as much as in us lies, and to make your present sorrow our own, but much more to pray God for your health and safety; which I trust your Lordship's subjects are doing with all diligence and devotion. But as for me, whom your Lordship's many and signal benefactions have made your debtor above all others, I count it my duty to express my gratitude by rendering you some special service. But now, by reason of my poverty both of mind and fortune, it is not possible for me to offer anything of value; therefore I gladly welcomed the suggestion of Doctor George Spalatin, one of your Lordship's court chaplains, that I should prepare a kind of spiritual consolation and present it to your Lordship, to whom, he said, it would be most acceptable. Being unwilling to reject this friendly counsel, I have put together the following fourteen chapters, after the fashion of an altar tablet,[238] and have called them, "The Fourteen."[239] They are to take the place of the fourteen saints whom our superstition has invented and called, "The Defenders against all evil." But this is a tablet not of silver, but of a spiritual sort; nor is it intended to adorn the walls of a church, but to uplift and strengthen a pious heart. I trust it will stand your Lordship in good stead in your present condition. It consists of two divisions; the former containing the images of seven evils, in the contemplation of which your present troubles will grow light; the latter presenting the images of seven

[237] PE: On the political influence of Frederick, as a factor in the German Reformation, see Hermelink, *Reformation und Gegenreformation* (Krüger's *Handbuch der Kirchengeschicte*, 3. Teil), p. 67.

[238] Otherwise known as a reredo or altar screen, this would be placed behind the altar, often possessing a three-dimensional quality from the sculptures and its color from scenic artwork. The present one with be composed of two halves. See the introduction.

[239] PE: *Tessaradecas*.

und dieselbe, deswegen von mir griechisch Tessaradecas genannt, E. C. F. G. opfere und überreiche; welche ich anstatt der vierzehn Nothhelfer, von wegen ihrer Anzahl und Werkes, E. C. F. G. heilwärtig wünschte zu sein. Es ist nicht eine silberne Tafel, sondern eine geistliche, welche sich gebührt, nicht in der Kirche, sondern in dem Gemüth aufzustellen. Sie wird auch sonst keine andere Statt haben, ihr dienstlich.

6. Nun hat diese Tafel zwei Theile. Der erste Theil hat sieben Bildnisse oder Betrachtungen der Uebel, Beschwerungen oder Widerwärtigkeiten; der andere Theil sieben Bildnisse der guten Dinge, wie es denn sich selbst anzeigen wird; darum gehab sich E. C. F. G. seliglich und geruhe nach ihrer gewöhnlichen fürstlichen hochgnädigen Erzeigung, diese meine geringe Arbeit gnädiglich anzunehmen, der ich mich auch unterthänig befehle.

E. C. F. G.
unterthäniger Diener
D. Martin Luther.

blessings, brought together for the same purpose.

May it please your Lordship graciously to accept this little work of mine, and to make such use of it that the diligent reading and contemplation of these "images" may minister some small comfort. I humbly commend myself to your lordship.[240]

Your Lordship's humble servant,
Martin Luther, Doctor.

Praefatio.

Apostolus Paulus Ro: xv[:4]. definiturus Christianorum solatia dicit 'Fratres, quaecunque scripta sunt ad nostram doctrinam scripta sunt, ut per patientiam et consolationem scripturarum spem habeamus', in quo aperte docet, solatia nostra e scripturis sanctis esse petenda. Scripturae sanctae autem gemino consolationis tropo utuntur, dum duas imagines rerum saluberrima temperie mixtas proponunt, malarum videlicet et bonarum, sicut Ecclesiasticus Sapiens dicit: In die malorum memor esto bonorum et in die bonorum memor esto malorum [Ecclus. 11:26]. Scit enim Spiritus sanctus talem ac

Die Vorrede.

1. Der heilige Apostel St. Paulus, als er zu den Römern am fünfzehnten den Unterschied der Christen-Vertröstung beschreiben wollte, sagte er, V. 4.: „Meine lieben Brüder, alles das, so geschrieben ist, das ist zu unserer Lehre und Unterweisung geschrieben, auf daß wir durch die Geduld und Vertröstung der heiligen Schrift Hoffnung haben." In welchem Spruche St. Paulus öffentlich lehrt, daß unsere Vertröstung oder Trost aus den heiligen Schriften gesucht und genommen solle werden. Aber die heilige Schrift gebraucht sich zweierlei Gestalt, Form und Weise der Vertröstung, indem daß

Preface

The Apostle Paul, treating in Romans xv. of the consolations of Christians, writes, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." [Rom. 15:4] In these words he plainly teaches that our consolations are to be drawn from the Holy Scriptures. Now the Holy Scriptures administer comfort after a twofold fashion, by presenting to our view blessings and evils, most wholesomely intermingled; as the wise Preacher saith, "In the day of evil be mindful of the good, and in the day of good be

[240] Phetsanghane: PE omits this sentence.

tantam esse homini rem quamcunque, qualis et quanta eius in ipso valuerit opinio: quod enim vile et nihili ducitur, parum quoque afficit seu amore, si veniat, seu dolore, si recedat. Ideo id omni studio conatur, ut hominem a rerum opinione et affectu avocet. Quod ubi effecerit, iam res quaelibet sunt indifferentes. Cum autem haec avocatio potissimum verbo fiat, quo transfertur opinio a re, quae praesenter afficit, in rem, quae vel absens est vel non afficit praesens, optimo iure non nisi per scripturarum consolationem habebimus, quae nos in die malorum avocat ad spectanda bona, quae vel praesentia vel futura sunt, simul in die bonorum avocat ad spectanda mala. Verum ut haec duo spectra et imagines melius capiamus, dabimus unicuique suas partes septem.

Prior imago habebit mala quae consyderentur Primo intra se, Secundo ante se, Tertio post se, Quarto iuxta se in sinistro, Quinto in dextro, Sexto infra se, Septimo supra se.

sie uns zwei Bildnisse der Dinge mit der allerheilsamsten Mäßigkeit durcheinander vermischt vorlegt, also, nämlich der bösen und der guten Dinge. Wie der weise Ecclesiasticus spricht, Sir. 11, 27.: „Du sollst in der Zeit des Unglücks der guten Dinge gedenken und in der Zeit des Glücks des Unglücks eindächtig sein.“ Denn der Heilige Geist weiß, daß eine jegliche Sache der Menschen, also gethan, geschickt und groß ist, wie gethan und wie groß die Wähnung der Menschen in ihnen davon überhand genommen hat. Denn was für nichtig und gering gehalten wird, gibt uns wenig zu schicken, etwan zu der Liebe, wenn es kommt, oder aber zu dem Schmerz, Leid und Betrübniß, wenn wir es verlieren. Derhalben wendet der Heilige Geist allen Fleiß vor, den Menschen dahin zu bringen und bewegen, daß er von der Wähnung, Achtung und Liebe zu den Gütern nicht angefochten und beschweret werde.

2. Und wenn er das zuwege gebracht hat, so sind dem Menschen alle Dinge gleich und ohne Unterschied. Weil aber diese Abforderung am meisten durch die Rede geschieht, durch welche die Wähnung von dem Dinge, das uns ansicht, auf das Ding verlegt wird, das etwan abwesend oder aber gegenwärtig ist und uns dennoch nichts zu schicken gibt: demnach werden wir auf's allerbilligste allein durch die heilige Schrift Ver tröstung haben, welche uns in unglücklichen Tagen abfordert, anzusehen etwan die gegen wärtigen, oder aber die zukünftigen guten Dinge, und desgleichen zu glücklichen Zeiten uns abfordert, die bösen Dinge anzuschauen.

3. Damit wir aber diese zwei Bildnisse desto besser begreifen und fassen mögen, wollen wir einem jeglichen

mindful of the evil." [Ecclus. 11:26[241]] For the Holy Spirit knows that a thing has only such meaning and value for a man as he assigns to it in his thoughts; for what he holds common and of no value will move him but little, either to pleasure when he obtains it, or to grief when he loses it. Therefore He endeavors with all His might to draw us away from thinking about things and from being moved by them; and when He has effected this, then all things whatsoever are alike to us. Now this drawing away is best accomplished by means of the Word, Whereby our thoughts are turned from the thing that moves us at the present moment to that which either is absent or does not at the moment move us. Therefore it is true that we shall attain to this state of mind only through the comfort of the Scriptures, which call us, in the day of evil, to the contemplation of good things, either present or to come, and, in the day of good, to the contemplation of evil things.

But let us, for our better understanding of these two series of pictures or images, divide each of them into seven parts. The first series will treat of the evils, and we shall consider (1) the evil within us, (2) the evil before us, (3) the evil behind us, (4) the evil on our left hand, (5) the evil on our right hand, (6) the evil beneath us, and (7) the evil above us.[242]

[241] Ecclesiasticus and other apocryphal books can be found and read in the World English Bible (WEB), a public domain revision of the American Standard Version of 1901 (worldenglish.bible/).

[242] PE: In the body of the work Luther places (6) between (3) and (4).

CAPUT PRIMUM
de spectro primo,

quod est malum internum.

Hoc ratum est et verissimum, sive id credat homo sive non, nullum esse posse in homine cruciatum tantum, qui pessimum sit malorum, quae in ipso sunt: adeo sunt longe plura et maiora in ipso mala quam quae sentit. Si enim suum malum sentiret, infernum sentiret, Nam infernum in se ipso habet. Quaeris 'quomodo?' Dicit propheta: Omnis homo mendax [Ps. 116:11], et iterum: Universa vanitas omnis homo vivens [Ps. 39:6]. Esse autem mendacem et vanum est esse vacuum veritate et re ipsa. At sine veritate et re ipsa esse est sine deo esse et nihil esse: hoc autem est in inferno et damnatum esse. Ideo deus misericorditer nos castigans leviora mala nobis aperit et imponit, sciens quod, si hominem in suum malum deduceret cognoscendum, mox in momento periret: sed et nonnullos hoc gustasse dedit, de quibus dicitur 'deducit ad inferos et reducit' [I Sam. 2:6]. Proinde recte dicunt, qui passiones corporales vocant quaedam monitoria mali interni. Et

Bildniß sieben besondere Theile geben. Denn das erste Bildniß wird haben die bösen Dinge, die betrachtet werden: zum ersten die bösen Dinge inwendig im Menschen; zum andern die bösen Dinge vor dem Men schen; zum dritten die bösen Dinge nach dem Menschen; zum vierten die bösen Dinge unter dem Menschen oder in der Hölle; zum fünften, die bösen Dinge zu der linken Hand des Menschen; zum sechsten, die bösen Dinge zu der rechten Hand des Menschen; und zum sieben ten, die bösen Dinge über dem Menschen, oder die obern bösen Dinge.

Der erste Unterscheid,

von den inwendigen bösen Dingen, die in dem Menschen selbst sein.

4. Das ist gewiß und eigentlich wahr, es glaube es der Mensch oder nicht, daß keine Pein, Schmerzen oder Beschwerung in dem Menschen so groß sein mag, daß er das allerärgste Uebel der bösen Dinge, die in ihm sein, empfindet; so gar viel mehr und größere Uebel und böse Dinge sind in dem Menschen, die er nicht fühlt und empfindet. Denn so der Mensch sein Uebel empfindet, so empfindet er die Hölle, denn er hat die Hölle in ihm selbst. Möchtest du fragen, wie und welcher Gestalt? Der Prophet sagt, Ps. 116, 11.: „Ein jeglicher Mensch ist ein Lügner"; und Ps. 39, 6.: „Ein jeglicher lebendiger Mensch ist ganz Eitelkeit." Ein Lügner und eitel sein, das ist leer oder ledig sein von der Wahrheit, und nichts in ihm haben. Aber ohne Wahrheit und ohne alle Dinge an ihm selbst sein, das ist ohne GOtt sein und gar nichts sein, und daselbe ist in der Hölle und verdammt sein.

5. Derhalben, wenn der allmächtige Gott uns barmherziglich straft, so

CHAPTER I

The First Image

The Evil Within Us

This is most certain and true—we may believe it or not—that no suffering in a man's experience, be it never so severe, can be the greatest of the evils that are within him. So many more and far greater evils are there within him than any that he feels. And if he were to feel those evils, he would feel the pains of hell; for he holds a hell within himself. Do you ask how this can be? The Prophet says, "All men are liars" [Ps. 116:11] and again, "Every man at his best state is altogether vanity." [Ps. 39:6] But to be a liar and vanity, is to be without truth and reality; and to be without truth and reality, is to be without God and to be nothing; and this is to be in hell and damned. Therefore, when God in His mercy chastens us, He reveals to us and lays upon us only the lighter evils; for if He were to lead us to the full knowledge of our evil, we should straightway perish. Yet even this He has given some to taste, and of them it is written, "He bringeth down to hell, and bringeth

Apostolus Heb. xij. vocat eas disciplinas dei paternas dicens 'flagellat autem omnem filium quem recipit' [Heb. 12:6], quod facit, ut his flagellis et parvis malis expellat magna ista mala, ne quando ea sentire oporteat, sicut proverb. xxij. Stultitia colligata est in corde pueri, sed virga disciplinae fugabit eam [Prov. 33:15]. Nonne et pii parentes plus in filiis dolent, si sint fures aut mali quam vulnerati? immo ipsimet eos caedunt et sautiant, ut mali esse non possint.[227]

Quid ergo obstat, quod hoc malum verum non sentitur? Nempe, ut dixi, deo disponente ita fit, ut homo non deficiat, si sua mala penitissima videret. Nam abscondit ea, volens sola fide ea cerni, dum ea indicat sensibili malo. Itaque in die malorum memor esto bonorum [Ecclus. 11:26]. Vide, quantum bonum sit non nosse totum malum: huius esto boni memor, et minus crutiabit sensibile malum. Ita rursus in die bonorum memor esto malorum, id est, dum indolens es verorum malorum, in hac indolentia gratus esto et memorare verorum malorum, tum fiet, ut minus sentias sensibile malum. Claret ergo, maiorem esse in homine

eröffnet und legt er uns auf die geringsten Uebel oder wenigsten böjen Dinge. Denn er weiß das, wenn er den Menschen dahin führte, daß er sein Uebel erkennete, daß er zur Stunde im Augenblicke verdürbe und verginge, welches er auch etlichen Menschen zu kosten gegeben hat, von welchen in der heiligen Schrift gesagt ist, 1 Sam. 2, 6.: „Er führet sie in die Hölle und wiederum daraus." Deswegen die recht sagen, die leibliche Leiden nennen Erinnerung des innerlichen Uebels oder der bösen Dinge, die der Mensch inwendig in ihm hat. Und St. Paulus heißt sie am 12. Cap., V. 6., zu den Hebräern „väterliche Zucht" oder Unterweisung GOttes: „Denn er geißelt einen jeglichen Sohn, den er annimmt." Welches er darum thut, daß er durch und mit solchen Geißeln und kleinen Uebeln will die großen Uebel austreiben, damit wir sie einst nicht dürften empfinden, wie am 22. Cap., V. 15., der Spruch des Weisen spricht: „Die Thorheit ist in dem Herzen des Kindes zusammengebunden; aber die Zuchtgerte wird sie austreiben."

6. Ist es nicht also, daß die frommen und getreuen Eltern größer Leid,

up." [1 Sam. 2:6] Therefore they say well who call our bodily sufferings the monitors of the evil within. And the Apostle, in Hebrews xii, calls them God's fatherly chastenings, when he says, "He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." [Heb. 12:6] And He does this, in order by such scourgings and lesser evils to drive out those great evils, that we may never need to feel them; as it is written, "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." [Prov. 33:15] Do not loving parents grieve more for their sons when they turn out thieves and evil-doers than when they receive a wound? Nay, they themselves beat them until the blood flows, to keep them from becoming evil-doers.[243]

What is it, then, that prevents us from feeling this our true evil? It is, as I have said, so ordered by God, that we may not perish on seeing the evils hidden in the depths of our hearts. For God keeps them hidden, and would have us discern them only by faith, when He points them out to us by means of the evil that we feel. Therefore, "In the day of evil be mindful of

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227 No. 3566A.: "…Mei parentes me strictissime usque ad pusillanimitatem coercuerunt. *Mein mutter steupet mich vmb einer eingen nuß willen* usque ad effusionem sanguinis. Et ita disciplina me tandem ad monasterium adegerunt, *wiewol sie es hertzlich gut gemein haben,* sed ego pusillanimus tantum. Ipsi non potuerunt discernere inter ingenia et correctiones, quomodo temperandae essent. *Man mus also straffen, das der apffel bei der ruten sei*…" (WA Tr. 3, 415)

No. 1559: "*Man soll die kinder nitt zu hart steuppen, den mein vatter steupt mich einmal also sehr, das ich im floh vnd das im bang was, bis er mich wider zu im gewenet. Ich wolt auch nitt gern mein Hausen seher schlagen, sunst wurd er blode vnd feind, so wust ich khein grosser lende*…" (WA Tr. 2, 134)

243 Some argue for a reference to Luther's childhood here based on comments such as those found in his Table Talk. The first was given between May 20 and 27, 1532 and regards Luther's father's discipline of his son: "One shouldn't whip children too hard. My father once whipped me so severely that I ran away from him, and he was worried that he might not win me back again. I wouldn't like to strike my little Hans very much, lest he should become shy and hate me. I know nothing that would give me greater sorrow." (AE 54, 157).

The second dates between March 28 and May 27, 1537 and possesses broader remarks on the extent of acceptable discipline: "…My parents kept me under very strict discipline, even to the point of making me timid. For the sake of a mere nut my mother beat me until the blood flowed. By such strict discipline the finally forced me into the monastery; though they meant it heartily well, I was only made timid by it. They weren't able to keep a right balance between temperament and punishment. One must punish in a way that the rod is accompanied by the apple." (AE 54, 234-5)

Schwiebert remarks "the severity of Luther's childhood has been overstated." He proceeds to explain that in the case of Luther's father that "[t]his was not an age of child psychology and that Luther's parents, like others, lacked the training and time for insight and self-restraint when they felt the moral integrity of their child was endangered." His overall assessment is one that emphasizes the normalcy of Luther's experience, the checks against abuse a community could perform, as well as the more tender moments Luther's parents had which are frequently overlooked (see No. 5050, WA Tr. 636) (Schwiebert, E. G. *Luther and His Times* [St. Louis: Concordia, 1950], 109).

semper indolentiam quam dolorem in hac vita, non quod non praesens sit malum totum, sed quod opinio et affectus eius non sit per dei bonitatem, qui abscondit ipsum.

Hinc videmus eos, quibus datum est suum verum malum intueri, quam atrociter in seipsos saeviant, quam nihil ducant quicquid pati possunt in tota vita, modo infernum suum non sentiant. Ita unusquisque faceret, si vel sentiret vel crederet firmiter malum suum internum, sponte advocaret externa mala, luderet in eis atque nunquam tristior esset quam dum non haberet mala, sicut novimus quosdam sanctos foecisse. Qualis David psal. vi.

Igitur prima imago consolatoria est sibiipsi dicere 'nondum, o homo, sentis malum tuum, gaude et gratias age, quod non sentire cogens', atque ita malum parvum comparatione maximi leve fiet. Hoc est, quod alii dicunt 'longe peiora, etiam infernum meritus sum', facile quidem dictu sed intolerabile sensu.

Atque hoc malum quantumlibet lateat, tamen fructus suos prodit satis sensibiles. Hii sunt timor et incertitudo trepidae conscientiae, qua fides impugnatur, dum homo nescit aut dubitat, an habeat propitium deum, qui fructus tanto acerbior est quanto fides infirmior. Atque haec sola infirmitas digne perpensa, cum sit spiritualis, longe praeponderat corporali, quam et levissimam reddit sui comparatione diligenter facta.

Praeter haec ad interna mala pertinet tota illa tragoedia, quam Ecclesiastes describit, ubi toties vanitatem et afflictionem spiritus commemorat [Eccl. 1:2, 14]. Quot enim consilia frustra capimus! quot vota nostra illuduntur! quot videmus, quot audimus, quae nollemus! Atque haec ipsa quae ad votum cedunt contra votum quoque cedunt: adeo nihil integrum atque perfectum est. Deinde haec omnia tanto

Betrübniß und Bekümmerniß haben von ihren Kindern, wenn sie Diebe oder sonst böse sein, denn wenn sie verwundet sein? Ja, die frommen Eltern schlagen ihre Kinder selbst, damit sie je nicht böse sein mögen. Was hindert's denn, daß dies wahrhaftige Uebel nicht empfundenwird? Allein das, wie ich gesagt habe, GOtt hat es also verordnet, daß der Mensch nicht verginge, wenn er seine Uebel oder innerlichen bösen Dinge auf's innerlichste sähe. Derhalben verbirgt sie GOtt und will, daß sie allein durch den Glauben gesehen werden, weil er sie durch das empfindliche oder sinnliche Uebel anzeigt; darum „seid zu der Zeit der bösen Dinge eindächtig der guten Dinge", Sir. 11, 27.

7. Siehe an, wie ein großes Gut ist es, daß man das ganze Uebel nicht kenne und wisse. Gedenke dieses Guten, so wird dich das sinnliche oder empfindliche Uebel desto weniger peinigen, beschweren und anfechten; und wiederum, am Tage der guten Dinge gedenke der bösen Dinge, das ist, weil du die wahrhaftigen Uebel nicht empfindest, so sei in derselben Empfindlichkeit dankbar und gedenke der wahrhaftigen Uebel, also würdest du das sinnliche Uebel desto weniger empfinden. Darum ist's offenbar und am Tage, daß der Unschmerz allezeit in dem Menschen größer ist, denn der Schmerz, Leid und Betrübniß in diesem Leben. Nicht darum, daß das ganze Uebel nicht gegenwärtig vorhanden wäre, sondern daß die Wähnung und Anfechtung desselben Uebels durch die Güte Gottes den Menschen nicht beschweret, welchem es GOtt verbirget.

8. Derhalben sehen wir, daß diejenigen, welche die Gnade haben, ihr wahrhaftes Uebel zu sehen, so ungütlich und ernsthaftiglich mit ihnen selbst umgehen, daß sie alles das, so sie leiden mögen, für gar nichts in ihrem

the good." [Ecclus. 11:26] Behold, how great a good it is, not to know the whole of our evil! Be mindful of this good, and the evil that you feel will press you less cruelly. Again, "In the day of good be mindful of the evil." That is to say. Whilst you do not feel your true evil, be grateful for this respite; then will the evil that you feel sit lightly upon you. It is clear, then, that in this life a man's freedom from pain is always greater than his pain. Not that his whole evil is not present with him, but he does not think about it and is not moved by it, through the goodness of God, Who keeps it hidden.

How furiously do those men rage against themselves, to whom their true evil has been revealed! How they count as nothing whatever sufferings life may bring, if only they might not feel the hell within! Even so would every one do, who felt or truly believed in the evil within him. Gladly would he call down all external evils on his head, and count them mere child's play; nay, he would never be more sorrowful than when he had no evils to bear, after the manner of certain of the saints, such as David in Psalm vi.

Therefore, this is our first image of consolation, that a man should say to himself: "Not yet, O man, dost thou feel thine evil. Rejoice and give thanks that thou dost not need to feel it!" And so the lesser evil grows light by comparison with the greatest evil. That is what others mean when they say, "I have deserved far worse things, yea, hell itself"—a thing easy to say, but horrible to contemplate.

And this evil, though never so deeply hidden, yet puts forth fruits that are plainly enough perceived. These are the dread and uncertainty of a trembling conscience, when faith is assailed, and a man is not sure, or doubts, whether he have a gracious

maiora sunt, quanto altiori loco et ordine quispiam sederit, quem necesse est prae caeteris in eadem re laborantibus longe pluribus et maioribus aestibus, fluctibus, procellis agitari, ut recte ps. ciij. dixerit, animalia pusilla et magna et reptilia, quorum non est numerus, in hoc mundi mari esse [Ps. 104:25], id est tentationum infinita nomina, sed et Iob. vij. vitam hominis ob hoc tentationem vocat [Iob 7:1].

Haec vero non ideo mala non sunt, quia minus sentiuntur, sed quia usu et assiduitate viluerunt et affectus atque opinio in hiis detriti sunt operante deo: ideo rara potius movent, quae adhuc nullo usu didicimus contemnere. Adeo verum est, vix millesimam partem nostrorum malorum nos sentire: adeo denique verum est, mala nostra non rei veritate sed opinione et affectu nostro metiri, sentiri aut non sentiri.

ganzen Leben achten, allein daß sie ihre Hölle nicht dürften empfinden. Also würde ein jeglicher Mensch thun, wenn er etwann fühlte oder empfände oder glaubte an sein inwendiges Uebel. Sodann wird es von ihm selbst zu ihm die auswendigen oder äußerlichen Uebel erfordern, darinnen spielen und nimmer nicht trauriger sein, denn wenn es nicht äußerliche Uebel, Beschwerung und Anfechtung hat, wie wir denn wissen, daß etliche liebe Heiligen gethan haben.

9. Demnach ist das erste tröstliche Bildniß, daß ein Mensch zu ihm selbst also spreche: O Mensch, du erkennest und weißt noch dein Uebel nicht; erfreue dich und danke GOtt, daß du nicht gezwungen werdest, es zu empfinden. Also wird das Uebel oder die Beschwerung durch die Gegenachtung und Vergleichung des größten Uebels leicht. Und das ist, daß die andern sprechen: ich habe viel ärgere und bösere Dinge, denn die Hölle, verdient. Es ist leicht zu sagen, aber unleidentlich zu empfinden; und wiewohl dies Uebel ganz verborgen und innerlich ist, dennoch erzeiget es und gibt an Tag seine Früchte fast empfindlich. Und das sind die Furcht und Unsicherheit des erschrockenen und furchtsamen Gewissens, dadurch der Glaube bekrieget und angefochten wird, wenn der Mensch nicht weiß oder zweifelt, ob er einen gnädigen GOtt habe. Und dieselbe Furcht ist so viel herber und bitterer, so viel schwächer der Glaube ist, und wenn diese Schwachheit allein würdiglich betrachtet wird, weil sie geistlich ist, so überwiegt sie die leibliche Schwachheit weit, welche sie auch auf's allerleichteste macht, wenn sie gegen der

God. And this fruit is bitter in proportion to the weakness of one's faith. Nay, when rightly considered, this weakness alone, being spiritual, far outweighs every weakness of the body, and renders it, in comparison, light as a feather.

Moreover, to the evils within us belong all those tragic experiences described by the Preacher, when he refers again and again to "vanity and vexation of spirit." [Eccl. 1:2, 14] How many of our plans come to naught! How oft our hopes are deceived! How many things that are not to our liking must we see and bear! And the very things that fall out according to our wish fall out also against our wish! So that there is nothing perfect and complete. Finally, all these things are so much greater, the higher one rises in rank and station;[244] for such a one will of necessity be driven about by far more and greater billows, floods, and tempests, than others who labor in a like case. As it is truly said in Psalm ciii,[245] "In the sea of this world there are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts," [Ps. 104:25] that is, an infinite number of trials. And Job [7:1], for this reason, calls the life of man a "trial."[246]

These evils do not, indeed, cease to be evils because they are less sharply felt by us; but we have grown accustomed to them from having them constantly with us, and through the goodness of God our thoughts and feelings concerning them have become blunted. That is why they move us the more deeply when we do feel them now and then, since we have not learned through familiarity to despise them. So true is it, therefore, that we

[244] PE: Luther has particular reference to the Elector's high rank.

[245] Luther follows the Vulgate numbering of the Psalms, which differs from the Hebrew (and the English and German). As far as Ps. 8 both agree; however the Vulgate (following the Greek version) counts Ps. 9 and 10 as one, thus dropping behind one in the numbering. But it divides Ps. 147 into two; vv. 1-11 being counted as Ps. 146, and vv. 12-20 as Ps. 147; both versions agree once again from Ps. 148 to 150.

[246] PE: Job calls it a "warfare" (*militia*).

andern fleißig verglichen und geschäßet wird.

10. Weiter gehören auch zu den innerlichen Uebeln oder bösen Dingen alle die Beschwerungen, die der weise Mann Ecclesiastes beschreibt, da er so dick und oft die Eitelkeit und Anfechtung des Geistes meldet und anzeigt. Denn wie viel Rathschläge und Bedenken haben und nehmen wir vergeblich vor? wie viele unserer Wünsche und Begierden gehen zurück und werden betrogen? O wie viele Dinge hören und sehen wir wider unsern Willen! und die Sachen, die nach unserm Wunsch und Willen gehen, geschehen auch wider unsern Wunsch und Willen. Also gar ist nichts ganz und vollkommen. Auch sind diese Uebel und bösen Dinge alle so viel größer, in so viel höherem und mehrerm Stande, Ehren und Würdigkeit einer sikt, der von Noth wegen muß größere und mehrere Anfechtung, Qual, Betrübniß und Jammers haben, denn die andern Leute, die auch dermaßen Beschwerung leiden; also, daß der Prophet in dem 104. Psalm, V. 25., recht gesagt hat: daß kleine, große und kriechende Thiere, deren keine Zahl sei, in dem Meer dieser Welt seien, das ist, daß der Anfechtungen unzählig viel seien. Also nennt Hiob auch im 7. Cap., V. 1., das Leben des Menschen deshalb eine Anfechtung.

11. Und diese innerlichen Uebel oder in wendigen bösen Dinge sind darum nichtsdestoweniger böse Dinge, daß sie nicht gefühlt und empfunden werden, sondern daß sie durch die Uebung und Stetigkeit verächtlich geworden sind und daß durch göttliche Wirkung die Wähnung und Anfechtung in denselben verzehret sein. Darum erinnern sie uns selten, die wir noch durch keine Uebung gelernt haben zu verachten; sogar wahr ist es, daß

feel scarce a thousandth part of our evils, and also that we estimate them and feel them or do not feel them, not as they are in themselves, but only as they exist in our thoughts and feelings.[247]

[247] PE: Luther harkens back to his discussion of this point in the Preface.

CAPUT SECUNDUM
de secundo spectro,

quod est malum futurum sive ante se.

Non parum levabit praesens quodcumque malum, si ad futura vertas animum, quae tot et talia et tanta sunt, ut huic uni datus sit magnus ille et unus principalium affectuum, qui timor dicitur, diffinientibus quibusdam, quod timor sit affectus de futuro malo, ut et Apostolus dicat Ro. xi. Noli altum sapere, sed time [Rom. 11:20]. Hoc malum eo maius est quo incertius est, quale et quantum sit futurum, Ita ut vulgo quoque proverbium teratur 'Non est ulla aetas scabiei etiam superior', quod tamen puerile atque adeo infantile malum est. Adeo a nullis nullius hominis malis ullus hominum libere securus est, sed quicquid patitur homo, pati potest et alter. Huc pertinent omnes historiae et tragediae omnium saeculorum, omnes querelae totius mundi: huc, quod quidam observarunt, plusquam trecenta nomina morborum, quibus corpus humanum vexari potest.[228] Si autem tot morbi, quot alii, putas, erunt casus rerum, amicorum, tandem ipsius animi, qui

wir kaum den tausendsten Theil unserer Uebel und bösen Dinge fühlen und empfinden. Sogar ist es auch endlich wahr, daß wir unsere Uebel und bösen Dinge nicht der Wahrheit und Sache selbst nach, sondern nach der Meinung und Wähnung ermessen, achten, empfinden oder nicht empfinden.

Der andere Unterscheid,

von den zukünftigen Nebeln und bösen Dingen der Menschen.

12. Das wird auch alle gegenwärtigen Uebel und bösen Dinge leichter, linder und geringer machen, wenn ein Mensch sein Gemüth zu den zukünftigen Uebeln oder bösen Dingen kehrt, deren so viele, dermaßen und so große sind, daß dagegen allein die große, und der fürnehmsten Bewegungen eine des Gemüths, die Furcht genannt, gegeben ist, welche etliche also beschreiben, daß sie sei eine Ergötzung oder Bewegung von dem zukünftigen Uebel; also daß auch St. Paulus sagt zu den Römern am 11. Cap., V. 20.: „Du sollst nicht hochweise sein, sondern dich fürchten" oder in der Furcht stehen. Und dies Uebel ist so viel größer, so viel ungewisser es ist, welchermaßen, und wie groß es sein wird, also, daß auch ein gemein Sprüchwort ist: Es ist kein Alter oder Zeit des menschlichen Lebens, das der Krätze oder Schäbigkeit zu alt wäre; welches doch sonst ein kindisch, ja ein säugkindisch Uebel ist. Also gar ist kein Mensch vor keines Menschen Uebeln und

CHAPTER II

The Second Image

The Future Evil, or the Evil Before Us

It will tend in no small degree to lighten any present evil if a man turn his mind to the evils to come. These are so many, so diverse, and so great, that out of them has arisen one of the strongest emotions of the soul; namely, fear. For fear has been defined by some as the emotion caused by coming evil. Even as the Apostle says in Romans xi, "Be not highminded, but fear." [Rom. 11:20] This evil is all the greater because of our uncertainty in what form and with what force it may come; so that there goes a popular saying, "No age is proof against the itch," although this is but a little children's disease. Even so, no man is safe from the evils that befall any other; for what one has suffered another may suffer also. Here belong all the tragic histories of the ages, and all the lamentations of the world. Here belong the more than three hundred diseases—which some have observed—with which the human body may be vexed.[248] And if there be so many diseases, how great

[228] G. Plinius Secundus, *Naturalis historia*, XXIV, c. VI "quid hoc esse dicamus aut quas deorum iras parum enim erant homini certa morborum genera, cum supra trecenta essent, nisi etiam nova timerentur! neque ipsi autem homines pauciora sibi opera sua negotia inportant."

[248] A reference to Pliny the Elder's *Natural History* Book 26, ch. 6 in which he discusses the continued prevalence of colic while various novel diseases were introduced to Rome: "To what cause are we to attribute these various diseases, or how is it that we have thus incurred the anger of the gods? Was it deemed too little for man to be exposed to fixed and determinate classes of maladies, already more than three hundred in number, that he must have new forms of disease to alarm him as well? And then, in addition to all these, not less in number are the troubles and misfortunes which man brings upon himself!" (*The Natural History of Pliny*, tr. Bostock, John and H. T. Riley, vol. 5, 155 [London: 1856])

omnium malorum principale subiectum est, tristitiaeque ac malorum unicum receptaculum?

Augescit vero malorum vis et sensus, quo maior fuerit et dignior status, ubi inopia, ignominia et omnia indigna, cum etiam subito possint accidere, necesse est, ut, sicut tenui pendent omnia filo, formidanda sint omni hora, non secus ac gladius ille, quem Dionysius tyrannus super caput convivae sui suspendit.

Horum autem quicquid non acciderit, pro lucro habendum est ac non parvo solatio eius mali, quod accidit, ut etiam hic cum Hieremia dicere cogaris 'misericordiae domini, quod non sumus consumpti' [Iere. 3:22f.]. Nam quicquid illorum non accidit, prohibente excelsi dextra non accidit, quae vallat nos undique tanta fortitudine (ut in Iob monstratum est), ut Satan et mala indigne etiam ferant, sese esse prohibita [Iob 1:10]. Proinde videmus, quam dulciter sit amandus dominus, quoties nobis quid acciderit, nempe quod unico hoc malo nos moneat amantissimus pater videre, quot instent mala quae nos petant, si non ipse obstaret, ac si dicat: Satan et Cahos malorum expetit te ut cribret te [Luc. 22:31], Sed ego posui terminum maris et dixi ei 'huc pervenient et confringentur tumentes fluctus tui', sicut dicit in Iob. xxxviij [Iob 38:10 f.].

Verum esto, nullum eorum sit venturum, forte sic deo volente, saltem illud quod omnium terribilium maximum dicitur, scilicet mors certissime

Beschwerungen sicher und frei, sondern alles, das ein Mensch leidet, mag dem andern auch begegnen und widerfahren.

13. Daher gehören alle Historien und beschwerlichen, jämmerlichen Geschichten, alle Zeit vom Anfang der Welt an; alle Klagen der ganzen Welt, und daß etliche vermerkt und wahrgenommen haben mehr denn dreihundert Arten von Krankheiten, durch welche des Menschen Leichnam mag angefochten werden. Wenn nun so viel Krankheiten sind, wie viel meinest du wohl, daß andere unglückliche Fälle und Beschwerungen der Güter, der Freunde und endlich auch des Gemüths sein, welches ein vornehmer Unterwurf und Boden aller Uebel und bösen Dinge, und ein einiges Behältniß der Traurigkeit und der Uebel ist, und je größer und würdiger der Stand ist, je mehr die Kraft und Empfindlichkeit der Uebel zunimmt.

14. Derhalben man sich muß alle Stunden, weil alle Dinge und Sachen gleich als an einem dünnen Faden hangen, der Armuth, der Unehre, Schande und allerlei Beschwerungen und Anfechtungen, besorgen: nicht anders, denn als vor dem Schwert, das der Wüthrich Dionysius zu Sicilien über das Haupt deß, den er zu ihm zu Tisch erfordert, gehängt hatte. Und was von solchen unglücklichen Zustehen und Uebeln nachbleibet, und uns nicht widerfährt, soll alles für einen Gewinn geschätzet und gehalten werden und für einen großen Trost des

will be the number of other misfortunes that may befall our possessions, our friends, and even our mind itself, that target of all evils, and trysting-place of sorrow and every ill!

And these evils increase in power and intensity as a man rises to higher rank and dignity;[249] in which estate he must needs dread every moment the coming of poverty, disgrace, and every indignity, which may indeed swiftly overtake him, for they all hang by but a slender thread, not unlike the sword which the tyrant Dionysius suspended above the head of the guest at his table.[250]

And if none of these evils befall us, we should count it our gain, and no small comfort in the evil that does befall us; so that we should feel constrained to say with Jeremiah, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed." [Lam. 3:22 f.] For when none of them befall us, it is because they have been kept from us by the right hand of the Most High that compasses us about with such mighty power (as we see in Job) that Satan and all evils can but gnash their teeth in helpless rage. [Job 1:10] From this we see how sweetly we ought to love our Lord, whenever any evil comes upon us. For our most loving Father would by that one evil have us see how many evils threaten us and would fall on us, if He did not Himself stand in the way, as though He said, "Satan and the host of evils have desired to have thee, to sift thee as wheat; [Luke:22:31] but I have

[249] PE: Particular reference to the Elector.

[250] A reference to "The Sword of Damocles." This tale was related by Circero in *Tusculan Disputations* 5.21: "…This tyrant [Dionysius], however, showed himself how happy he really was; for once, when Damocles, one of his flatterers, was dilating in conversation on his forces, his wealth, the greatness of his power, the plenty he enjoyed, the grandeur of his royal palaces, and maintaining that no one was ever happier, 'Have you an inclination,' said he, 'Damocles, as this kind of life pleases you, to have a taste of it yourself, and to make a trial of the good fortune that attends me?'… There were ointments and garlands; perfumes were burned; tables provided with the most exquisite meats. Damocles thought himself very happy. In the midst of this apparatus, Dionysius ordered a bright sword to be let down from the ceiling, suspended by a single horse-hair, so as to hang over the head of that happy man. After which he neither cast his eye on those handsome waiters, nor on the well-wrought plate; nor touched any of the provisions: presently the garlands fell to pieces. At last he entreated the tyrant to give him leave to go, for that now he had no desire to be happy. Does not Dionysius, then, seem to have declared there can be no happiness for one who is under constant apprehensions?" (*Cicero's Tusculan Disputations*, Yonge, tr., New York: Harper & Bro., 1877)

futura est et nihil incertius hora eius. Quod sane malum tantum est, ut videamus multos homines etiam cum omnibus praedictis malis malle vivere quam illis finitis semel mori. Atque huic uni, cum caetera contemnat, scriptura quoque accommodat timorem, dicens 'Memorare novissima tua, et inaeternum non peccabis' [Ecclus. 7:40]. Huc vide, quot meditationes, quot libri, quot modi, quot remedia sunt congesta, ut hac unius mali memoria peccatis absterreant, mundum contemptibilem faciant, passiones et mala allevient et tribulatos consolentur, comparatione tarn horribilis et magni sed aliquando necessarii mali. Nemo est qui non omnia mala optet subire, si per ea liceret et mortis malum evadere. Hoc sancti quoque timuerunt, hoc Christus cum pavore et sanguineo sudore subivit [Luc. 22:44], Ita ut misericordia divina nullo maiore negocio curarit pusillanimes confortare quam in hoc malo, ut videbimus infra.

Haec omnia vero communia sunt omnibus hominibus, sicut et communia salutis beneficia in eisdem malis. Caeterum Christianis nova causa est timendi futuri mali et propria, quae omnia mala praedicta facile superet. Haec est quam Apostolus pingit i. Corin. x. dicens: Qui stat, videat ne cadat [1 Cor. 10:12]. Adeo lubrica via est, adeo potens est hostis, armatus nostris propriis viribus (id est carnis et omnium affectiouum malarum praesidiis), stipatus infinitis mundi copiis, delitiis et voluptatibus a dextra, asperitatibus et hominum malis voluntatibus a sinistra, praeter eam, qua ipse instructissimus est mille modis nocendi, seducendi, perdendi arte. Ita vivimus, ut ne momento quidem securi simus de bono proposito nostro. Cyprianus multa huiusmodi

Uebels und Unfalls, der uns begegnet ist; also, daß du gezwungen würdest mit dem heiligen Propheten Jeremia zu sprechen, Klagl. 3, 22.: „Das ist die Barmherzigkeit GOttes, daß wir nicht sind umgekommen und verzehret worden." Denn alles das Unglück und Uebel, so uns nicht übergangen, ist durch gnädige Verhinderung der Rechten des allerhöchsten GOttes nachblieben, welche göttliche Güte und Barmherzigkeit uns allenthalben mit so großer Stärke befestigt, wie im Hiob, Cap. 1, 10. 11., bewiesen ist, daß es dem Teufel und den Uebeln wehe thut, daß sie verhindert worden sind. Darum sehen wir, wie treulich und herzlich GOtt der Allmächtige von uns soll geliebt werden, so oft uns etwas Widerwärtiges und Beschwerliches zusteht; denn der allerfreundlichste Vater erinnert uns durch dies einige Uebel, zu sehen, wie viel uns Uebel übergehen würden, die uns nachtrachten, wenn er nicht wehrete und dafür wäre. Als wollte er sagen: Der Teufel und die ganze Anzahl und Versammlung der Uebel will dir zu und trachtet nach dir, dich gleich wie durch ein Sieb zu räden, Luc. 22, 31. „Aber ich habe dem Meer ein Ende gesezt und zu ihm gesagt: Hierher werden deine großen Bulgen kommen und zerbrochen werden", wie er Hiob am 38. Cap., V. 11., sagt.

15. Und wenn gleich vielleicht, vermittelst göttlichen Willens, dieser Uebel keines über dich gehet, so wird doch das Uebel, so das allergrößte aller erschrecklichen Dinge genannt wird, kommen, das ist, der Tod wird eigentlich und gewiß kommen, wiewohl nichts Ungewisseres ist, denn die Stunde des Todes. Und dies Uebel, der Tod, ist so groß, daß wir sehen, daß viele Menschen auch mit und bei allen obberührten Uebeln lieber leben

marked out bounds for the sea, and have said, Hitherto shaft thou come, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed [Job 38:10]," as He saith in Job xxxviii.

And, granted that perchance, if God please, none of these things will come upon you; nevertheless, that which is known as the greatest of terrors, death, is certain to come, and nothing is less certain than the hour of its coming. Truly, this is so great an evil that there are many who would rather live on amid all the above-named evils than to die once and have them ended. With this one thing the Scriptures, which hold all others in contempt, associate fear, saying, "Remember thy end, and thou shalt never do amiss." [Ecclus. 7:40] Behold, how many meditations, how many books, how many rules and remedies have been brought together, in order, by calling to men's minds this one evil, to keep them from sin, to render the world contemptible, to lighten suffering, to comfort the afflicted,—all by a comparison with this great and terrible, and yet so inevitable, evil of death. There is no one who would not wish to undergo all evils if by this it were permitted to evade an evil death.[251] This evil even the saints dreaded, and Christ submitted to it with trembling and bloody sweat. [Luke 22:44] So that the divine Mercy hath been nowhere more concerned to comfort our little faith than in the matter of this evil, as we shall see below.

But all these things are common to all men, even as the blessings of salvation under these evils are common to all. For Christians, however, there is another and a particular reason for dreading the evils to come, which easily surpasses all the evils that have been mentioned. It is that which the

[251] This sentence is omitted from PE (Phetsanghane). The translation is my own.

commemorans in Epistola de mortalitate docet, optandam esse mortem tanquam subventricem velocem ad evadenda haec mala.[229] Ac vere, ubi fuerint bonicordes hii homines, qui haec pericula infinita inferni digne animo tractant, videmus eos contempta vita et morte (id est omnibus malis praedictis) optare solvi, ut hoc malo peccatorum, in quo sunt, ut priore spectro diximus, et in quod cadere possunt, de quo nunc dicimus, simul solvantur. Et sunt sane heae [hae] duae rationes iustissimae non tantum mortis optandae, sed et omnium malorum contemnendorum, nedum unius mali leviter ferendi, si cui dederit dominus, ut eis permoveatur: donum utique dei est eis moveri. Quis enim recte Christianus non optet etiam mori, nedum infirmari, qui videat ac sentiat, se dum sanus vivit in peccatis esse et continue in plura ruere posse et cottidie ruere, ac sic contra amabilissimam amabilissimi patris sui voluntatem sine intermissione agere? Hoc enim indignationis aestu et Paulus Ro. vij. commotus, cum se non agere bonum quod vellet sed malum quod nollet questus fuisset, [Rom. 7:19] exclamavit: Infoelix ego homo, quis me liberabit de corpore mortis huius? Gratia dei, inquit, per Ihesum Christum &c. parum diligit deum patrem suum, qui non praefert mortis malo hoc peccandi malum,

wollten, denn nach Veränderung derselben Uebel einmal sterben. Und diesen Nebeln allen legt die Schrift, die sonst alle anderen Uebel verachtet, die Furcht zu und spricht, Sir. 7, 40.: „Bedenke die letzen Dinge, so wirst du in Ewigkeit nicht sündigen."

16. Nun siehe, wie viele Betrachtungen, wie viele Bücher, wie viele Weisen, wie viele Arzneien zusammengetragen sind, daß man durch die Erinnerung und das Gedächtniß dieses einzigen Uebels die Leute möchte von den Sünden abschrecken, die Welt verächtlich machen, die Leiden, Anfechtungen und Uebel erleichtern und lindern und die Betrübten durch die Vergleichung oder Gegenachtung eines so erschreck lichen und großen, aber unterweilen nothdürftigen Uebels zu vertrösten. Denn es ist je niemand, der ihm nicht wünschte, lieber alle anderen Uebel und Unglücke zu erleiden und erdulden, wenn er dadurch dem Uebel des Todes möchte entwerden. Denn vor diesem Uebel haben sich auch die Heiligen gefürchtet; daran hat sich auch Christus, unser lieber HErr und Seligmacher, mit Furcht, Scheu und blutigem Schweiß begeben, Luc. 22, 42-44., also daß die göttliche Barmherzigkeit mit keiner andern großen Sache verschafft hat die kleinmüthigen und verzagten Menschen

Apostle portrays in I. Corinthians x, when he says, "He that standeth, let him take heed lest he fall." [1 Cor. 10:12] So unstable is our footing, and so powerful our foe, armed with our own strength (that is, the weapons of our flesh and all our evil lusts), attended by the countless armies of the world, its delights and pleasures on the right hand, its hardships and the plots of wicked men on the left, and, besides all this, master himself of the art of doing us harm, seducing us, and bringing us down to destruction by a thousand different ways. Such is our life that we are not safe for one moment in our good intentions. Cyprian, who in his *De Mortalitate*[252] touches on many of these matters, teaches that death is to be desired as a swift means of escape from these evils. And truly, wherever there have been high-hearted men, who brought their minds steadily to bear on these infinite perils of hell, we find them, with contempt of life and death (that is, all the aforesaid evils), desiring to die, that so they might be delivered at one and the same time from this evil of the sins in which they now are (of which we spoke in the previous chapter), and of the sins into which they might fall (of which we are treating now). And these are, indeed, two most weighty reasons why we should not only desire death, but also

[229] Cyprianus, *de Mortalitate*, caput 5: "Tot persecutiones animus quotidie palitur, tot periculis pectus urgetur; et delectat hic inter diaboli gladios diu stare, cum magis concupiscendum sit et optandum ad Christum, subveniente velocius morte, properare, ipso instruente nos et dicente: *Amen amen dico vobis quoniam vos plorabitis et plangetis, saeculum autem gaudebit; vos tristes eritis, sed tristitia vestra in laetitiam veniet* (Joan. xvi, 20). Quis non tristitia carere oplet? quis non ad laetitiam venire festinet? Quando autem in laetitiam veniat nostra tristitia Dominus denuo ipse declarat dicens: *Iterum videbo vos, et gaudebit cor vestrum, et gaudium vestrum nemo auferet a vobis* (*Ibid.* 22). Cum ergo Christum videre gaudere sit, nec possit esse gaudium nostrum nisi cum viderimus Christum, quae caecitas animi quaeve dementia est amare pressuras et poenas et lacrymas mundi, et non festinare potius ad gaudium quod numquam possit auferri?" (PL 4, cols. 585-586)

[252] Cyprianus, On the Mortality, ch. 5: "So many persecutions the soul suffers daily, with so many risks is the heart wearied, and yet it delights to abide here long among the devil's weapons, although it should rather be our craving and wish to hasten to Christ by the aid of a quicker death; as He Himself instructs us, and says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy." [John 16:20] Who would not desire to be without sadness? who would not hasten to attain to joy? But when our sadness shall be turned into joy, the Lord Himself again declares, when He says, "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no man shall take from you." [John 16:22] Since, therefore, to see Christ is to rejoice, and we cannot have joy unless when we shall see Christ, what blindness of mind or what folly is it to love the world's afflictions, and punishments, and tears, and not rather to hasten to the joy which can never be taken away!" (ANF 5, 470)

cum ille mortem in hoc ordinarit, ut hoc malum aliquando finiat et sit mors vitae ac iustitiae ministra, de quibus infra.

denn in diesem Uebel, wie wir folgend sehen werden, zu stärken und trösten.

17. Aber diese Uebel alle sind gemein allen Menschen auf Erden, wie denn auch die Gutthaten des Heils in denselben Uebeln und Beschwerungen gemein sind. Aber die christgläubigen Menschen haben eine neue, eigene und sonderliche Ursache, sich vor dem zukünftigen Uebel zu fürchten, die alle benannten Uebel ohne Zweifel übertrifft, und ist eben die Ursache, die St. Paulus zu den Corinthern am 10. Cap., V. 12., anzeigt, da er sagt: „Der da stehet, der sehe, daß er nicht falle.“ So schlüpferig ist der Weg, so mächtig ist der gewappnete Feind, Luc. 11, 21., aus unserm eigenen Vermögen, das ist, durch den Halt und Behelf des Fleisches, und aller bösen Anfechtung und Bewegung des Gemüths, umringt mit einem unendlichen, unzähligen Heere der Welt, den Wohllüsten zu der rechten, und den Widerwärtigkeiten und bösen Willen der Menchen zu der linken Hand, neben der Arglistigkeit, damit er auf's allergescheideste und bereiteste ist, in tausenderlei Wege und Weisen uns zu schaden, zu verführen und zu verderben.

18. Also leben wir, daß wir auch nicht einen Augenblick unsers guten Vornehmens sicher und gewiß sind. St. Cyprian erzählt dermaßen Uebel viel in seiner Epistel von dem Sterben und lehrt und sagt, daß man den Tod wünschen soll, als einen schnellen und schleunigen Nothhelfer, aller dieser Uebel, bösen Dinge, Widerwärtigkeiten und Beschwerungen zu entwerden. Und wahrlich, wo die gutherzigen Menschen sein, die diese unendlichen Uebel der Hölle würdiglich betrachten: so sehen wir, daß sie Lebens und Todes, das ist, aller berührten Uebel und Widerwärtigkeit ungeachtet,

despise all evils, to say nothing of lightly bearing a single evil; if the Lord grant us to be moved thereby. For it is God's gift that we are moved thereby. For what true Christian will not even desire to die, and much more to bear sickness, seeing that, so long as he lives and is in health, he is in sin, and is constantly prone to fall, yea, is falling every day, into more sins; and is thus constantly thwarting the most loving will of his most loving Father! To such a heat of indignation was St. Paul moved, in Romans vii, when after complaining that he did not the good that he would, but the evil that he would not, [Rom. 7:19] he cried out, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me the body of this death? The grace of God,”[253] he answers, “through Jesus Christ.”

That man loves God his Father but little, who does not prefer the evil of dying to this evil of sinning. For God has appointed death, that this evil might come to an end, and that death might be the minister of life and righteousness, of which more below.

[253] PE: Vulgate reading.

ihnen wünschen und begehren zu sterben, damit sie dieses Uebels der Sünde, in dem sie sein, wie wir in dem vorigen Bildniß gesaget haben, und in das sie fallen mögen, davon jetzt geredet wird, zugleich erlöset und ledig werden mögen. Und sicherlich, diese Ursachen beide sind die allerbilligste Bewegung, nicht allein den Tod zu wünschen, sondern alle Uebel und Widerwärtigkeit zu verachten, und vielmehr ein einiges Uebel leichtlich zu erleiden, so GOtt der HErr jemand verleihet, dadurch bewegt zu werden; denn es ist GOttes Gabe, daß man dadurch beweget werde.

19. Denn welcher recht christgläubiger Mensch wollte ihm nicht wünschen, nicht allein krank zu sein, sondern auch zu sterben, der da siehet und empfindet, daß er in seiner Gesundheit in Sünden ist, und stets in mehr Sünden möchte fallen, und täglich fallen, und also wider den allerlieblichsten Willen seines allerlieblichsten Vaters ohne Unterlaß thun. Denn St. Paulus, bewegt durch die Hitze des Zorns und Unwillens, zu den Römern am 7. Cap., V. 19., als er geklagt hat, „daß er das Gute nicht thäte, das er wollte, sondern das Uebel, das er nicht wollte“, hat mit erhabener Stimme geschrieen, V. 24.: „O ich unseliger Mensch, wer wird mich erlösen von dem Leichnam dieses Todes?“ Die Gnade GOttes, sagt er, durch JEsum Christum etc. Denn der Mensch hat GOtt, seinen Vater, nicht recht lieb, der nicht das Uebel der Sünde für größer hält, denn das Uebel des Todes, weil GOtt den Tod allein dazu verordnet hat, das Uebel der Sünde endlich zu verändern und abzuschneiden. Also daß der Tod ist ein Diener des Lebens und der Gerechtigkeit; wie weiter hernach folgen wird.

CAPUT TERCIUM
de spectro tercio,

quod est malum preteritum seu post nos.

In hoc eximie prae caeteris lucet dulcis misericordia dei patris potens nos consolari in omni angustia nostra. Neque enim praesentiorem manum dei super se quilibet sentit quam dum recogitat annos vitae praeteritae, dicit B. Augustinus: Si homini daretur optio, ut aut moreretur aut praeteritam vitam suam iterum ageret, futurum esse, ut mori eligeret, tanta et pericula et mala videns, quae vix et aegre evaserit. Quae sententia verissima est, si digne pensetur.

Hic enim cernere licet, quoties sine suo studio, sine cura, immo citra et contra votum multa foecerit et passus sit, quorum adeo non habuit consilium, antequam fierent aut dum gererentur, ut finito opere secum mirans tum primum cogatur dicere 'Quorsum haec mihi cesserunt, quae nec cogitavi aut longe alia cogitavi?' ita ut verum sit proverbium 'Homo proponit, deus autem disponit' [Prov. 16:9], id est, in diversum ponit et aliud, quam homo proponit, efficit, ut vel in hoc uno negare non possimus vitam et actus nostros non nostra prudentia sed mirabili potentia et consilio et bonitate dei fuisse gubernatam. Hic perspicitur, quoties deus nobiscum fuerit, ubi nec vidimus nec sensimus, ac quam vere dixerit Petrus: Ipsi enim est cura de nobis omnibus [I Petr. 5:7].

Quare si non essent libri neque sermones, tamen ipsa nostra vita per tot mala et pericula ducta, si consyderetur, abunde nobis divinam bonitatem commendat praesentissimam et suavissimam esse, ut quae nos longe ultra consilium et sensum nostrum velut in

Der dritte Unterscheid,

von den vergangenen oder hinterwärtigen Uebeln des Menschen.

20. In diesem dritten Bildniß der vergangenen oder hinterwärtigen Uebel des Menschen erscheint vornehmlich vor andern die süße und liebliche Barmherzigkeit GOttes des Vaters, die uns vermag in allen unsern Aengsten, Betrübnissen, Widerwärtigkeiten und Beschwerungen zu trösten. Denn kein Mensch empfindet die Gewalt und Kraft GOttes stärker, heilwärtiger und kräftiger über sich, denn wenn er betrachtet die Jahre seines vergangenen Lebens. Darum spricht St. Augustinus: Wenn dem Menschen die Wahl gegeben wird, entweder zu sterben oder sein vergangenes Leben noch einst zu treiben: so würde er den Tod und Sterben erwählen, weil er so viel Gefährlichkeit und Uebel sähe, dem er kaum und schwerlich entworden wäre. Welcher Spruch, wenn er recht bedacht wird, ganz wahrhaftig ist.

21. Denn allhier kann ein Mensch sehen, wie gar viel er ohne seines Fleisches Zuthun und Sorgfältigkeit, ja, auch wohl ohne und wider seinen Wunsch und Willen er gethan und gelitten hat, darauf er so gar kleine Gedanken, Rath oder Gedenken gehabt hat, ehe sie aus gerichtet, oder weil sie gehandelt worden, daß er nach Vollziehung des Werks sich bei ihm dar ob verwundert und sprechen muß: Wozu sind mir diese Sachen kommen, darauf ich nie oder je viel anders gedacht habe? also, daß dies Sprüchwort wahr ist, Sprüchw. 16, 1.: „Der Mensch nimmt ihm vor, aber GOtt schicket und schafft es wohl" wider des Menschen Vornehmen und Willen, also daß wir durch dies Einige nicht

CHAPTER III

The Third Image

The Past Evil, or the Evil Behind Us

In this image, above all others, the sweet mercy of God our Father shines forth, able to comfort us in every distress. For never does a man feel the hand of God more closely upon him than when he calls to mind the years of his past life. St. Augustine says: "If a man were set before the choice either of dying or of living his past life over, it is certain that he would choose to die, seeing the many perils and evils which he had so hardly escaped."[254] This is a very true saying, if it be rightly pondered.

Here a man may see how often he has done and suffered many things, without any exertion or care of his own, nay, without and against his wish; of which things he took so little thought before they came to pass, or while they were taking place, that, only after all was over, he found himself compelled to exclaim in great surprise: "Whence have all these things come to me, when I never gave them a thought, or when I thought of something very different?" So that the proverb is true, "Man proposeth, but God disposeth"; [Prov. 16:9] that is, God turns things about, and brings to pass something far different from that which man proposes. Therefore, from this consideration alone, it is impossible for us to deny that our life and all our actions are under the direction, not of our own prudence, but of the wonderful power, wisdom, and goodness of God. Here we see how often God was with us when we knew it not, and with what truth Peter has said, "He careth for us all." [1 Peter 5:7]

sinu suo portavit et ut Moses Deut, xxxij. dicit: Dominus custodivit eum quasi pupillam oculi sui, circumduxit eum et portavit in humeris suis [Deut. 32:10 ff.].

Atque hinc natae sunt exhortationes ille in Psalterio: Memor fui dierum antiquorum, meditatus sum in omnibus operibus tuis, et in factis manuum tuarum meditabar [Ps. 143:5]. Memor ero ab initio mirabilium tuorum [Ps. 77:11]. Et: Memor fui iudiciorum tuorum, et consolatus sum [Ps. 119:52]. Haec et similia huc spectant omnia, ut sciamus, quod, si tunc praesentem fuisse deum nobis videmus, quando non cogitabamus nec videbatur adesse, iam quoque praesentem esse non dubitemus, dum absens nobis videtur. Nam qui in multis necessitatibus nos sine nobis suscepit, etiam in modico, etiam si derelinquere videatur, non derelinquet, sicut in Isaia dicit: Ad momentum et modicum dereliqui te, et in miserationibus magnis congregabo te [Isa. 54:7].

His si addas 'Quis nostri curam habuit tot noctes dormientium? quis pro nobis sollicitus fuit, quoties laboravimus, lusimus et omnia illa infinita egimus, in quibus nihil ipsi pro nobis solliciti fuimus? Aut quantum est tempus, quo nostri curam habemus? Ipse avarus, dum sollicitus est pecuniam quaerere, in quaerendo et agendo sollicitudinem ponat necesse est', ita videmus, quam universa nostra cura, velimus nolimus, ad deum solum redeat, vix rarissime nobis nostro consilio relictis, quod tamen et ipsum ideo facit dominus, ut erudiat nos ad agnoscendam suam bonitatem, ut aliquando videamus, quantum intersit inter curam suam et nostram. Ita fit, ut nos quandoque levi morbo aliove malo sinat

leugnen mögen, daß unser Leben, Sachen und Händel nicht durch unsere Klugheit und Vorsicht, sondern durch die wunderbarliche Gewalt, Rath und Güte GOttes geleitet und regiert ist worden. Allda wird erkannt und vermerket, wie gar oft GOtt bei uns gewesen ist, da wir ihn doch weder gesehen noch empfunden haben.

22. Derhalben St. Peter, 1. Ep. 5, 7., wahrhaftiglich gesagt hat: „GOtt ist für uns alle sorgfältig." Darum, wenn gleich keine Bücher oder Predigten wären; dennoch, so unser Leben, durch so viel Uebel, Widerwärtigkeit und Gefährlichkeit geführet und zugebracht, betrachtet wird: so beweiset es uns genugsamlich, daß die Güte GOttes auf's allerheilwärtigste, gegenwärtigste und allerlieblichste ist, als die da uns weit über unsern Rath, Gedanken, Sinn und Empfinden, gleich als in seinem Schooß und Armen getragen, und wie Moses am 32. Cap., V. 11., des fünften Buches sagt: „Der HErr hat ihn wie den Augapfel seines Auges behütet, und ihn ungeführet, und auf seinen Schultern getragen." Und daher sind erwachsen diese Erinnerung und Vermahnungen in dem Psalter, Ps. 143, 5.: „O HErr, ich bin eingedenk gewesen der alten Tage, in allen deinen Werken, und ich habe die Werke deiner Hände betrachtet"; Ps. 77, 4.: „Ich werde gedenken vom Anfang deiner Wunderwerke"; und Ps. 119, 52.: „Ich bin eingedenk gewesen deiner Gerichte und Urtheile, und bin getröstet worden." Diese und dergleichen Sprüche ziehen sich alle dahin, daß wir wissen sollen, daß, so wir sehen, daß die Zeit GOtt bei uns gewesen ist, da wir's nicht gedacht oder es dafür nicht geachtet, als wäre er bei uns gewesen; daß wir daran nicht

Therefore, even if there were no books or tracts, yet our very life itself, brought through so many evils and dangers, if we will but consider it, abundantly commends to us the ever present and most tender goodness of God, which, far above all that we purposed or perceived, carried us as it were in its bosom. As Moses says in Deuteronomy xxxii, "The Lord kept him as the apple of His eye, and led him about, and bore him on His shoulders." [Deut. 32:10 ff.][255]

Hence arose those exhortations in the Psalter: "I remember the days of old; I meditate on all Thy works; I muse on the work of Thy hands." [Ps. 143:5] "Surely I will remember Thy wonders of old." [Ps. 77:11] Again, "I remembered Thy judgments of old, O Lord, and have comforted myself," [Ps. 119:52] These exhortations and the like are intended to teach us that, if God was with us when we thought it not, or when He seemed not to be with us, we should not doubt that He is always with us, even when He appears to be far from us. For He Who, in so many necessities, has sustained us without our aid, will not forsake us in our smaller need, even though He seem to be forsaking us. As He saith in Isaiah, "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee." [Isa. 54:7]

Moreover, who had the care of us so many a night, while we slept? Who cared for us when we were at work, or at play, or engaged in all those countless things wherein we had no care for ourselves? Indeed, how much of our time is there in which we have the care of ourselves? Even the miser, careful as he is to gain riches, must perforce put by his care in the midst of all his getting

[254] Augustine, *Confessions*, 10, caput. 28, para. 39 "Is not the life of man upon earth a temptation? Who is he that wishes for vexations and difficulties? Thou commandest them to be endured, not to be loved. For no man loves what he endures, though he may love to endure. For notwithstanding he rejoices to endure, he would rather there were naught for him to endure." (NPNF, First Series, 1, 153)

[255] PE: From the Vulgate.

impeti, dissimulans suam curam (non enim aliquando non curat), simul tamen prohibens, ne tot mala quot instant undique simul irruant, ut nos sicut filiolos charissimos tentet, an suae curae per omnem aliam vitam cognitae velimus nos credere, et quam inutilis et impotens sit nostra cura videre. Quid enim nobis prosumus aut possemus prodesse tota vita, qui unicum dolorem cruris parvissimo tempore curare non possumus?

Quid ergo tam anxii sumus in puncto unius periculi aut mali, nec ei curam relinquimus, cum vita ipsa teste tot malis ab eo eruti sumus et servati sine nostro studio? Ista, inquam, nosse est opera dei nosse, meditari in operibus eius et ea memoria consolari in adversitatibus [Ps. 143:5, 119:52]. Qui autem ignorant, incurrent in illud psalmi xxvij. Quoniam non intellexerunt opera dei et opera manuum eius, destrues eos et non aedificabis eos [Ps. 28:5]. Sunt enim ingrati universae curae dei super eos in tota vita habitae, qui in modico puncto curam sui non ei cedunt.

zweifeln sollten, GOtt sei auch die Zeit bei uns, wenn wir meinen, er sei nicht bei uns. Denn der unser in viel Nöthen, Beschwerung und Widerwärtigkeit sich hat angenommen, wird uns auch in einem Geringen, ob wir uns wohl lassen dünken, er verlasse uns, nicht verlassen; wie er denn im Jesaia spricht, Cap. 54, 7.: „Ich habe dich einen Augenblick und ein wenig verlassen, und werde dich in großer Erbarmung versammeln“ oder zusammenbringen.

23. Wenn du nun dazu thust auch die Betrachtung, wer unsere Sorge gehabt, wenn wir so viele Nächte geschlafen haben; wer für uns gesorgt hat, wenn wir gearbeitet, gespielt und alle anderen unendlichen Geschäfte und Händel gethan und getrieben haben, in welchen wir nichts für uns selbst gesorgt haben? oder wie groß ist doch die Zeit, in welcher wir für uns selbst sorgen? Wenn der geizige Mensch sorgfältig ist, Gut und Geld zu erlangen, so muß er von Noth wegen die Sorgfältigkeit auf die Suchung, Nachtrachtung und den Handel seßen. Also sehen wir, daß alle unsere Sorge, wir wollen oder wollen nicht, wiederum allein auf GOtt kommt, und wir sind kaum auf's allerseltenste unserem eigenen Rath, Versorgen und Versehen gelassen, welches doch GOtt der HErr darum thut, uns zu unterweisen, seine Güte zu kosten, und endlich zu sehen, wie ein großer Unterscheid sei zwischen seiner und unserer Sorge.

and gaining. And so we see that, whether we will or no, all our care falls back on God alone, and we are scarcely ever left to care for ourselves. Still, God does now and again leave us to care for ourselves, in order to bring home to us His goodness, and to teach us how great the difference between His care and ours. Hence, He suffers us now and then to be assailed by some slight malady or other ill, dissembling His care for us (for He never ceases to care), and yet at the same time preventing the many evils that threaten us on every side from bursting in upon us all together. Hereby He tries us as His well-beloved children, to see whether we will not trust His care, which extends through all our past life, and learn how vain and powerless a thing is any care of ours. How little, indeed, do we or can we do for ourselves, throughout our life, when we are not able to stop a small pain in one of our limbs, even for the shortest space of time?[256]

Why, then, are we so anxious in the matter of a single danger or evil, and do not rather leave our care to Him? For our whole life bears witness to the many evils from which He has delivered us, without our doing. To know this, is indeed to know the works of God, to meditate on His works, [Ps. 143:5, 119:52] and by the remembrance of them to comfort ourselves in our adversities. But they that know this not come under that other word in Psalm xxvii, “Because they regard not the works of the Lord, nor the

[256] Some see a reference here to the time Luther's leg was sliced by his own sword. E.g. PE: “Luther is probably thinking of his own experience, when, near Erfurt, he came near bleeding to death from an injury to his ankle. See Köstlin-Kawerau, *Martin Luther*, 1, 44.” This event is recounted Luther's table talk No. 119 and is commonly found in his biographies: “When he [Luther] desired to set out and was on the road, by accident he struck his shin against [his] sword and broke open an artery” (Translation mine. | AE 54, 14)

However, in PE, AE, and Phetsanghane *unicum* is rendered as “small” in the text which goes against the near bleeding to death the table talk later relates. If one were to see a reference to Luther's Erfurt trial, he would have to render *unicum* as “singularly” or “unparalleled” as suggested in *A Latin* Dictionary edited by Lewis and Short (p. 1932). Yet this creates a dissonance in the argument of Luther's. Certainly, our reliance on God is exemplified not in out inability to prevent major wounds but minor aches. The other option, rendering unicum as “sole” or “alone”, could conform to Luther's argument in that we are unable to stop not only simultaneous pains but even just one at a time. However, this reasoning is not completely satisfactory.

24. Also kommt es, daß GOtt uns zuweilen läßt mit einer geringen Krankheit oder einer andern Widerwärtigkeit, Nebel oder Beschwerung angefochten werden und stellt sich eben, als sorgte er die Zeit nicht für uns -- denn er sorget allezeit für uns --, und verhindert und erwehret doch die Zeit mit zu, daß so viele Uebel und Beschwerung, so uns von allen Dertern zustehen, nicht mit einander uns überfallen, uns, als seine liebsten Söhne und Kinder, zu versuchen, ob wir uns seiner Sorge, die wir sonst in allem unserm Leben erkannt und erfahren haben, befehlen, glauben und vertrauen wollen und zusehen, wie gar unnütz, unverträglich und ohnmächtig unsere Sorge ist; was sind wir denn so ängstlich, wehmüthig und forgfältig in einer geringen Weile einer kleinen Widerwärtigkeit?

25. Denn was sein wir uns nüz, was helfen wir uns, oder was möchten wir uns unser ganz Leben über helfen, so wir einen einigen Schmerzen eines Beins auch die allerwenigste Zeit nicht mögen heilen. Und warum lassen wir die Sorge nicht GOtt dem HErrn, die wir mit Bezeugung des Lebens von ihm aus so viel Uebeln und Beschwerung, ohne unsers Zuthuns Fleiß und Arbeit, erlöset und erhaben sein? Das und dergleichen wissen, ist wissen die Werke GOttes und seine Werke betrachten und durch solche Gedächtnisse und Bedenken uns in unsern Beschwerungen und Widerwärtigkeiten trösten. Die aber das nicht wissen, werden fallen in diesen Spruch des 28. Psalms, V. 5.: „Weil sie die Werke GOttes und die Werke seiner Hände nicht verstanden haben, wirst du sie zerstören und sie nicht erbauen.“ Denn sie sein undankbar der ganzen Sorgfältigkeit GOttes, so er ihr ganz Leben für sie gehabt, die eine allerkleinste Weile die Sorge für sie ihm nicht übergeben noch vertrauen.

operations of His hand, He shall destroy them, and not build them up." [Ps. 28:5] For those men are ungrateful toward God for all His care over them during their whole life, who will not, for one small moment, commit their care to Him.

CAPUT QUARTUM
de spectro quarto,

quod est malum infernum seu infra nos.

Adhuc non aliud vidimus in omnibus malis quae patimur, quam quod divina bonitas tanta tamque praesens sit, ut inter innumera mala, quibus sumus in hac vita circumdati et penitus in eisdem incarcerati, vix paucula nec ea omni tempore sinantur nos impetere, ita ut quodvis malum praesens, quo premimur, non nisi monitorium sit lucri cuiusdam magni, quo nos honorat deus, dum non sinit nos opprimi multitudine malorum, in quibus sumus. Quod enim miraculum, si quis infinitis ictibus tentetur, vel uno saltem aliquando tangatur? immo gratia est non omnibus feriri, miraculum est non multis feriri.

Primum itaque eorum quae infra nos sunt malorum est mors, alterum infernus.

Mortem aliorum tam variam, tam indignam si consyderemus, qua plectuntur peccatores, facile videbimus, quanto nos lucro minora meritis nostris patiamur. Quot enim laqueo, furca, aqua strangulantur aut gladio quoque feriuntur, qui longe minora peccata forte foecerunt quam nos! ita ut illorum mors et miseria nobis a Christo quoque pro spectro obiiciatur, in quo videamus, quid nos meruerimus: dicit enim Lucae xiij. cum ei nunciarent quidam de Gallileis, quorum Pilatus sanguinem miscuerat cum sacrificiis eorum: Respondit ‘putatis, quod hii Gallilei prae omnibus Gallileis peccatores fuerint, quia talia passi sunt? Non, dico vobis, sed nisi poenitentiam habueritis, omnes similiter peribitis, Sicut illi decem et octo, supra quos cecidit turris in Siloah et occidit

Der vierte Unterscheid,

von den untern Nebeln.

26. Bisher haben wir nichts in allen Uebeln gesehen, die wir leiden, denn daß die göttliche Sanftmüthigkeit, Güte und Barmherzigkeit so groß, gegenwärtig und gnädig ist, daß unter den unzähligen Uebeln, Beschwerung und Widerwärtigkeiten, mit welchen wir in diesem Leben umgeben, umringet und gänzlich darin gefänglich gesetzet sind, kaum derselben wenig, und dennoch nicht allezeit gestattet werden, uns zu beschweren und anfechten. Also, daß ein jegliches gegenwärtiges Uebel oder Beschwerung, damit wir zu der Zeit angefochten werden, nichts anders denn eine Erinnerung ist eines großen Gewinnstes, damit uns GOtt verehret, und uns nicht läßt unterdrücket werden von der großen Menge der Uebel, Beschwerung und Widerwärtigkeit, in denen wir sind. Denn was ist das für ein Wunder, so jemand mit unendlichen und unzähligen Schlägen wird angefochten, und daß derselbige Mensch endlich mit einem einigen Schlag verltzet werde? Ja, es ist eine Gnade, daß er nicht mit allen Schlägen getroffen ist.

27. Derhalben das erste Uebel unter uns ist der Tod, und das andere die Hölle. Wenn wir nun den so mannigfaltigen, hässigen, grausamen Tod, damit die Sünder gestraft werden, betrachten: so werden wir leichtlich sehen, mit was großem Gewinn wir viel weniger leiden, denn wir verdient haben. Denn, o wie viele werden gehängt, ertränkt, erwürgt oder geköpft, die vielleicht weniger Sünde gethan haben, denn wir! Also, daß derselben Tod und Elend uns von Christo,

CHAPTER IV

The Fourth Image

The Infernal Evil, or the Evil Beneath Us

Hitherto we have seen, in all the evils that we endure, naught but the goodness of God, which is so great and so near that of all the countless evils with which we are surrounded in this life, and in which we are shut up as in a prison, but a very few are permitted to approach us, and these never for long together. So that, when we are oppressed by any present evil, it is only to remind us of some great gain with which God is honoring us, in that He does not suffer us to be overwhelmed by the multitude of evils with which we are surrounded. For what wonder that a man, at whom an infinite number of blows is aimed, should be touched by one now and then! Nay, it is a mercy not to be struck by all; it is a miracle to be struck by but a few.

The first, then, of the evils beneath us is death, and the other is hell.

If we will but consider the deaths, so diverse and so terrible, with which other sinners are punished, we shall soon see how great a gain is ours in that we suffer far less than we have deserved. How many men are hanged, strangled, drowned or beheaded, who perchance committed less sins than we! And their death and misery are held up to us by Christ as in a mirror, in which we may behold what we have deserved. For it is said in Luke xiii, when they told Him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices, that He replied: “Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered these things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or

eos, putatis, quod et ipsi debitores erant praeter omnes homines habitantes Hierusalem? Non, dico vobis, sed si poenitentiam non habueritis, omnes similiter peribitis' [Luc. 13:1ff.]. Neque enim cogitare possumus mitiora nobis deberi mala, qui maiora vel similia peccata commisimus, Neque iustitia et veritas dei propter nos iniqua et mendax erit, quae unicuique iuxta opera sua reddere disposuit, Si non ipsi praevenerimus et saltem parvulo malo patienter tolerato satisfecerimus.

In inferno vero et aeterna damnatione quot milia sunt, qui nec millesimam peccatorum nostrorum partem habent! quot ibi virgines, pueri et quos nos innocentes vocamus! quot religiosi, sacerdotes, coniuges, qui tota vita visi sunt deo servire et uno forte casu lapsi inaeternum plectuntur! Neque enim hic dissimulandum est, una est iustitia dei in quolibet peccato, aequaliter odit et damnat peccatum in quocunque repertum fuerit. An non hic videmus inestimabilem dei misericordiam, quae toties meritos non damnavit? quantum, quaeso, est quod pati possumus vel tota vita ad poenam aeternam, quam illi uno delicto meriti patiuntur, nos interim liberi et multis a deo dissimulatis peccatis servati! Quod enim haec dei beneficia non curamus aut frigide aestimamus, Ingratitudo est et quaedam incredulitatis insensatae duritia. Praeterea huc convehendi sunt tot infideles, gentes, Iudaei, infantes: quibus si data fuissent ea quae nobis data sunt, non in inferno sed in coelo essent ac longe minus peccassent. Nam et hoc spectrum Christus nobis Matt, ob oculos ponit dicens: Ve tibi, CoroZaim [*sic*], Ve tibi, Bethsaida, Quia si in Tyro et Sidone factae fuissent virtutes, quae factae sunt in vobis, olim in cilicio et in cinere poenitentiam egissent: veruntamen

unserm HErrn und Seligmacher, für ein Bildniß und Spiegel vorgeworfen wird, uns darinnen zu spiegeln und anzusehen, was wir verdient haben. Denn unser HErr und Seligmacher sagt, Luc. am 13. Cap., V. 1. ff., da ihm etliche verkündigten, daß Pilatus etliche Galiläer hätte lassen erstechen und opfern, antwortet er: „Haltet ihr es dafür, daß diese Galiläer sein die größten Sünder vor allen Galiläern gewesen, die das erlitten haben? Nein, ich sage euch, sondern es sei denn, daß ihr Buße thut, so werdet ihr alle dermaßen umkommen; wie auch die achtzehn, auf welche der Thurm zu Siloa gefallen, und sie erschlagen hat: Meinet ihr, daß sie auch schuldig gewesen vor allen Menschen, so in Jerusalem wohnen?" Denn wir können, mögen auch nicht gedenken, daß uns geringere Uebel gebühren, so wir haben größere oder gleiche Sünde geübt und getrieben. Auch wird die Gerechtigkeit und Wahrheit GOttes um unsertwillen nicht unrecht und lügenhaftig werden, die beschlossen hat, einem jeglichen nach seinen Werken Wiedergeltung zu thun, wenn wir ihm selbst nicht vorkommen und auf's wenigste mit geduldiger Erleidung eines kleinen Uebels oder Beschwerung genuggethan haben.

28. Aber in der Hölle und der ewigen Verdammniß, wie viel tausend sind ihrer, die auch den tausendsten Theil unserer Sünden kaum haben? O wie viel Jungfrauen, Kinder, und die wir die Unschuldigen nennen, sind daselbst? Wie viele Mönche, Nonnen, Priester, Eheleute, die des Wesens gewesen, daß man es dafür gehalten, sie haben ihr Leben lang GOtt gedient, und vielleicht durch einen Fall gefallen, in Ewigkeit gepeinigt werden. Darum muß allhier nicht verhalten werden, daß eine einige Gerechtigkeit

those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you. Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." [Luke 13:1 ff.] For we need not expect that we, who have committed the same or even graver sins, shall escape with a lighter punishment. Nor will the justice and truth of God, which hath decreed to render to every man according to his deeds, be turned for our sake into injustice and a lie, unless we hasten to make satisfaction by at least bearing our trifling evil with patience.[257]

And how many thousands are there in hell and everlasting damnation, who have not committed the thousandth part of our sins! How many virgins, youths, and those whom we call innocents, are there! How many monks, priests, and married pairs! These seemed all their life long to be serving God, and, it may be for a single lapse, are now being punished for ever. For, it may not be denied, the justice of God is the same in the case of every sin, whatever it may be, and hates and punishes all sin alike, it matters not in whom it is found. Do we not then see here the inestimable mercy of God, Who hath not condemned us, though we have so many times deserved condemnation? Pray, what are all the sufferings life can bring, compared to eternal punishment, which they indeed justly endure on account of one sin, while we go free and unpunished for our many sins, which God hath covered! That we take no thought of these benefits of God, or but lightly esteem them, that is ingratitude, and the hardening of our unbelieving heart.

Moreover, we must include here the many infidels, Gentiles, Jews, and

[257] PE: Luther no longer held this view of "satisfaction" in 1535.

dico vobis, Tyro et Sidoni remissius erit in die iudicii quam vobis. Ve tibi, Capernaum, quae usque in coelum exaltata es, usque in infernum descendes, quia si in Zodomis factae fuissent

GOttes ist in einer jeglichen Sünde; denn GOtt haßt und verdammt die Sünde in einem jeglichen, in dem sie erfunden wird. Sehen wir allhier nicht die unermessene Barmherzigkeit

infants,[258] who, if to them had been granted the advantages that we enjoy, would not now be in hell, but rather in heaven, and who would have sinned far less than we. For this mirror also

[258] Lat. *infantes*. Ger. *unmündige Kinder*. Luther would later adjust his understanding of the salvation of unbaptized infants. In 1542, towards the close of his career, Luther composed a brief supplement entitled "Comfort for Women Who Have Had a Miscarriage" (WA 53, [202] 205-208 | AE 43, [243] 247-250). In this work he first portrays the miscarriage as a moment from God for developing patience. He then assures the mother that her sincere prayers expressing her true desire to have baptized the child will be received by God. This power, Luther says, comes from the Christian faith one has. He then cites as evidence the conversion of Augustine prompted by his own mother's prayers as well as the salvation of Israelite children who were not circumcised by the eighth day due to the prayers of their parents. He concludes with stating that God's power is not limited by the sacraments and is truly found in the covenant in His word. In additional material provided by EA XV, 55-56 Luther supports the previous material with examples of this salvation beyond the prescribed means of God, such as the case of Job. This possibility, however, Luther believes is not intended by God to be proclaimed widely "so that what he had ordained and commanded would not be despised" by the iniquity of the world.

In his lectures on Genesis 19:14 Luther would discuss the relationship between God's absolute power and that of His creatures. The conclusion he reached is that God acted in His absolute power at creation but now has established all things and uses them to His purpose. We are therefore to work within these bounds, never being idle (cf. Gen. 3:17-19 and 2 Thes. 3), trusting in God for good things beyond these limits (i.e. the salvation of the unbaptized), and refraining from ascending to Heaven without a ladder:

"Therefore the rule stands, of which I spoke above, that God no longer wishes to act according to extraordinary, or, as the Sophists speak, absolute power: but through His creatures, who He does not want to be idle. Thus He gives food, not as to the Jews in the desert, when from Heaven he would give Manna, but through labor, when we diligently do the work of our calling, and no longer does He want to mold men out of soil, like Adam, but uses the union of a man and woman, which He blesses. These they call the ordered power of God, which one may know when He uses the employment of either angels or men. Thus in the prophet Amos, the third chapter, there is a noteworthy sentiment that: "God does nothing, which he would not have signified before by his prophets." [Amos 3:7]

"But if sometime something happens outside of the employment of either angels or men: there you will have rightly said: "What is above us is nothing to us." For something must be considered by us according to the ordered power and from this a verdict must be accepted. God can save without baptism, as we believe that infants [*infantes*], who sometimes by parental negligence or by some other accident, do not acquire baptism, are not damned for that reason, but in the Church it must be concluded and taught by us according to the ordered power of God that without that external baptism no one is saved. Thus it is the ordered power of God that water makes wet, fire burns, etc. But in Babylon in the center of the fire Daniel's companions lived unharmed. This was the absolute power of God, according to which he was acting at that time, but he no longer commands us according to this. For He wants us to do according to his ordered power.

"The opinion of Dionysius is read in schools: that God works through essence: we through a quality that has flowed down, but who will understand this? [See Pseudo Dionysius' *Περὶ θείων ὀνομάτων / De divinis nominibus* 5.4 (Parker, John *The Works of Dionysius the Areopagite*, Part I, London: 1897), 75-76] However, he who rightly holds that canon which we have laid down is able to judge Pope and world in all their wisdom; namely, God conducts in an orderly manner all things through the employment of men. Therefore, no one obtains salvation by spiritual speculation (as they call them), without external things. Attention must be given to the Word, baptism must be sought for, the Eucharist must be accepted, absolution must be required. Indeed, all these are externals, but are included in the Word. Therefore, without them the Holy Spirit works nothing.

"Before this time -- before God showed the light of the Gospel [i.e. the beginning of the Reformation] -- many things were written and said about the speculative and active life: moreover, in monasteries of both sexes [i.e. monasteries and convents] those who were nearly the best were occupied in this pursuit, so that visions and revelations would be presented to them. Moreover, from this it became that certain ones jotted down all of their dreams: certainly these ones all expected singular illuminations without external things: but what is this other than to want to ascend to Heaven without a ladder? Therefore, they are most frequently deceived by tricks of the devil." (Translation mine. | WA 43, 71-72 | AE 3, 274-275).

Luther's effort to pair ceremonies with heartfelt faith is summarized well by Jaroslav Pelikan: "The exposition of passages in Genesis on sacrifice and worship gave Luther an opportunity … to combine a prophetic warning against externalism and ceremonialism with a priestly stress on the need for externals and ceremonies…" (AE companion volume, *Luther the Expositor*, 100)

In summary, Luther's understanding of the salvation of unbaptized infants was a part of his understanding of the sacrament of baptism. This he took, in part, to be an outward sign of God's grace instituted by God because of the fallen nature of mankind to show what was pleasing to Him (*Luther the Expositor*, 106). Such a ceremony was in place not because God was forced to institute it for salvation but because God, after sin, now acts through his creatures. Therefore, in tandem with the biblical examples of effective intercession for those beyond the prescribed means of God, we may be certain that unbaptized infants are in the most merciful hands with the absolute power able to save them. Luther ends this train of thought with the expression of his desire to not grant grounds for the dismissal of baptism. Baptism, he says, is so heavily emphasized by God because of the hardness of man's heart and that it is necessary to proclaim baptism as requisite for salvation as it is God's chosen means to which we are bound.

virtutes, quae factae sunt in te, forte mansissent usque in hanc diem: veruntamen dico vobis, quia terrae Zodomorum remissius erit in die iudicii quam tibi [Matth. 11:21ff.]. Videmus ergo, quantum laudis et amoris debeamus optimo deo nostro in quocunque malo huius vitae, quod vix stilla una sit eorum quae meriti sumus, quae ipse Iob mari comparat et arenae maris [Iob 6:3].

GOttes, welche die, so die Verdammniß so oft verdient, nicht verdammt hat. Denn ich bitte dich, wie groß ist das, so wir auch unser Leben lang leiden mögen, gegen der ewigen Pein, so die mit einer einigen Sünde verdient, leiden? Und wir sein indeß frei, und durch göttliche Verhehlung vieler unsrer Sünden unversehrt geblieben. Denn daß wir der Wohlthat GOttes nicht achten oder zu wenig und unfleißig achten, ist die Undankbarkeit und eine Härtigkeit des unsinnlichen, unempfindlichen Glaubens.

29. Daher gehören auch so viel Heiden, ungläubige Juden, unmündige Kinder, welche, so ihnen die Gnade wäre gegeben worden, die uns gegeben ist, so wären sie nicht in der Hölle, sondern im Himmel, und hätten viel weniger gesündigt. Denn dies Bildniß hat Christus, unser HErr und Seligmacher, uns auch in St. Matthäi Evangelium vorgetragen und gesagt, Matth. 11, 21. ff.: Wehe dir, Chorazim, wehe dir, Bethsaida! Denn so die Wunderwerke wären zu Tyrus und Sidon geschehen, so unter euch geschehen, so hätten sie vorlängst in härenen Kleidern und in der Asche gebüßet. Aber ich sage euch, am Tage des Gerichts wird es denen von Tyrus und Sidon baß denn euch gehen. Wehe dir, Capernaum, daß du bis in den Himmel erhaben bist, denn du würdest bis in die Hölle abfallen. Denn wenn zu Sodoma die Wunderzeichen geschehen wären, so in dir geschehen sein, so wären sie vielleicht bis auf diesen Tag blieben. Aber doch sage ich euch, dem Erdreich zu Sodoma wird es am Tage des Gerichts baß denn dir gehen. Derohalben sehen wir, wie viel und großes Lobes und Liebens wir unserm allerfrömmsten GOtt schuldig sein in einem jeglichen Uebel dieser Welt, weil es kaum ein Tröpflein ist der Uebel, Unglück und Beschwerung, so wir verdient haben, welche der Hiob dem

does Christ set before us, when He says in Matthew xi: “Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained to this day. But I say unto you. That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.” [Matt. 11:21 ff.] We see, therefore, what praise and love we owe to our good Lord, in any evil whatsoever of this life; for it is but a tiny drop of the evils which we have deserved, and which Job compares to the sea, and to the sand by the seashore [Job 6:3].

CAPUT QUINTUM
de spectro quinto,

quod est malum sinistrum seu ad sinistram.

Hic ante oculos ponendus cumulus ille adversariorum et malorum hominum, et in iis primo videndum, quot mala non intulerunt corpori, rebus, famae, animabus nostris, quae voluissent inferre, nisi deo disponente non potuissent, et quanto quis in celsiore loco sedet et latius regnat, tanto pluribus eiusmodi adversariorum insidiis, machinis, oblocutionibus et tentationibus est expositus, in quibus omnibus praesentissimam dei manum licet intelligere et experiri. Quid ergo mirum, si uno aliquando tangamur? Deinde et eorum propria mala sunt videnda, non ut in eis exultemus, sed ut compatiamur. Sunt autem et ipsi eisdem malis omnibus communiter expositi quibus nos, ut in praedictis spectris facile est intueri. Verum in hoc nobis sunt miseriores, quod extra societatem nostram sunt tam corporalem quam spiritualem.

Nihil est enim hoc malum, quod patimur, ad illud, quod illi sunt in peccatis, in infidelitate, sub ira dei, sub imperio diaboli, mancipia miserrima impietatis et peccati, ita ut, si totus mundus eis malediceret, peiora imprecari non posset. Quae omnia si digne videamus, simul videbimus, quanto benigniore dei dignatione in fide, in regno Christi, in servitute dei toleramus parvulum corpusculi aliquod incommodum, quod in tanta rerum optimarum opulentia ne sentiri quidem oporteat, quin et illorum miseria sic debet Christiano et pio cordi esse molesta, ut suas molestias delitias arbitretur. Sic enim iubet Paulus Phil. ij. Singuli quae sunt aliorum consyderantes, non quae

Meer und dem Sand oder Grieß des Meeres vergleicht.

Der fünfte Unterscheid,

von den Uebeln auf der linken Seite.

30. Die Uebel oder bösen Dinge auf der linken Seite sind der große Hause unserer Widerwärtigen und der bösen Menschen. Und an denselben sollen wir erstlich sehen, was sie für Uebel und Beschwerung unserm Leibe, unserm Gerüchte und Namen, unsern Gütern und Seelen nicht erzeigt haben, die sie uns hätten wollen erzeigen, wenn sie durch göttliche Schickung und Ordnung daran nicht wären verhindert worden. Und je höhers Standes und größeren Regiments ein jeglicher ist, so viel mehr hat er dermaßen Feinde, Gefährlichkeit, Beschwerung, Nachrede und Anfechtung, in welchen allen man mag die allerheilsamste und gegenwärtigste Hülfe GOttes vermerken, befinden und erfahren. Darum ist es kein Wunder, daß wir zuweilen durch benannter Widerwärtigkeiten eine berührt werden. Auch sollen wir unserer Widerwärtigen und der bösen Menschen eigene Uebel ansehen, nicht uns darinnen zu erfreuen, sondern ein Mitleiden mit ihnen zu haben. Denn sie müssen auch selbst gemeiniglich der Beschwerung und Nebel gewärtig sein, der wir warten; wie in den oben berührten Bildnissen zu vermerken ist.

31. Aber in dem sind sie unseliger, denn wir, daß sie außerhalb unserer geistlichen und weltlichen Gesellschaft sind und Gemeinschaft. Denn das Uebel, so wir leiden, ist nichts gegen ihrem Uebel, darum daß sie in Sünden, in Unglauben, in dem Zorn GOttes, unter der Obrigkeit des Teufels und die allerunseligsten, gefangenen Knechte der Ungottesfurcht und

CHAPTER V

The Fifth Image

The Evil on Our Left Hand

Here we must set before our eyes the whole multitude of our adversaries and wicked men, and consider, first, how many evils they would have inflicted on our bodies, our property, our good name, and on our souls, but could not, being prevented by the providence of God. Indeed, the higher one's station and the wider one's sway,[259] the more is he exposed to the intrigues, slanders, plots, and stratagems of his enemies. In all this we may mark and feel the very present hand of God, and need not wonder if we be touched now and then by one of these evils.

Again, let us consider the evils which these men themselves endure; not that we may exult over them, but that we may feel pity for them. For they, too, are exposed to all these same evils, in common with ourselves; as may be seen in the preceding times. Only, they are in a worse plight than we, because they stand outside our fellowship,[260] both as to body and soul. For the evil that we endure is as nothing compared to their evil estate; for they are in sin and unbelief, under the wrath of God, and under the dominion of the devil, wretched slaves to ungodliness and sin, so that, if the whole world were to heap curses on their heads, it could wish them no worse things. If we rightly consider this, we shall see how much more highly favored we are of God, in that we may bear our slight bodily ill in faith, in the kingdom of Christ, and in the service of God; and, indeed, are scarce able to feel it, being so rich in those high

sua. Hoc enim sentite in vobis, quod et in Christo Ihesu, Qui cum in forma dei esset, formam servi accepit &c. [Phil. 2:4] Hoc est, affectu piissimo nostram formam induit, non secus se gerens in malis nostris, quam si sua essent propria, ita sui suorumque bonorum oblitus et exinanitus, ut omnino inveniretur in similitudinem hominum factus, nihil humani alienum a se ducens, tantummodo nostris malis occupatus.

Hoc affectu animati et eo spectro commoti, solent sancti pro malis, etiam inimicis suis orare et omnia facere exemplo Christi et obliti suarum iniuriarum vel iustitiarum anxii esse [Luc. 6:27 f.; I Cor. 9:12, 15], quomodo illos liberent a malis suis, quibus incomparabiliter magis cruciantur quam suis corporalibus malis, sicut de Lot scribit S. Petrus ij. Pe. ij. 'habitans inter eos, qui de die in diem animam iustam iniquis operibus cruciabant' [II Petr. 2:8].

Vides ergo, quanta hic appareat abyssus malorum et occasio miserendi et compatiendi, simul parvuli nostri mali obliviscendi, si charitas dei in nobis fuerit, quam nihil nos deus pati permittat ad ea quae illi patiuntur. Quod vero haec nos leviter movent, in causa est, quod oculus cordis non satis purus est, quo videremus quanta sit ignominia et miseria hominis sub peccato iacentis, id est a deo separati et a diabolo possessi. Quis enim tam ferreus est, qui non contabescat ad miserandam speciem eorum, qui in foribus Ecclesiarum et plateis iacent corrosis

der Sünde sind; also daß, wenn sie die ganze Welt vermaledeiete, ihnen bösere und ärgere Dinge nicht möchte wünschen. Welches alles, so wir es recht ansähen, würden wir auch zugleich sehen, mit was größerer und milderer Gnade GOttes wir im Glauben, im Reiche Christi, im Dienste GOttes erleiden eine kleine Gefährlichkeit des Leichnams, welche wir in einem so großen, reichen Ueberfluß der allerbesten Dinge kaum empfinden sollten. Auch soll derselben unserer Feinde und böser Menschen Unseligkeit einem christlichen und gottesfürchtigen Herzen so leid, verdrüßlich und beschwerlich sein, daß es soll seine eigene Beschwerung für Lust und Ergötzlichkeit halten.

32. Also gebietet St. Paulus zu den Philippern am andern Cap., V. 4. ff.: „Ein jeglicher soll auf der andern Frommen und Beschwerung, und nicht auf das Seine Achtung haben. Denn das sollt ihr in euch empfinden, daß in dem HErrn Christo JEsu, welcher, als er in der Gestalt GOttes war, hat er sich nicht für einen Raub geachtet, sondern sich selbst leer gemachet, und die Gestalt des Knechts an sich genommen." Das ist so viel geredet: Unser HErr Christus hat mit dem allerholdseligsten und freundlichsten Willen unsere Gestalt angezogen und sich nicht anders in unsern Uebeln bewiesen und gehalten, denn als wären sie sein eigen gewesen, und hat sogar sein selbst und seiner guten Dinge vergessen und sich von denselben geleeret und geledigt, daß er allenthalben

blessings. Nay, this wretchedness of theirs must so sorely trouble a pious Christian heart as to make its own troubles seem delights beside them. Thus St. Paul exhorts in Philippians ii, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, took upon Him the form of a servant, etc." [Phil. 2:4 ff.] That is to say, Out of fervent love He took our form upon Himself, bearing Himself amidst our evils as though they were His own, and so completely forgetting Himself and all His goods, and humbling Himself, that He was found in all things to be made in the likeness of men, counting nothing human foreign to Himself, and wholly giving Himself over to our evils.

Animated with this love, and moved by this example, the saints are wont to pray for wicked men, even their enemies, [Luke 6:27 f.] and to do all things for them after the example of Christ; and forgetting their own injuries and rights [I Cor. 9:12, 15], to take thought only how they may rescue them from their evils, with which they are far more cruelly tormented than with any evils of the body. Even as St. Peter writes of Lot, that he "dwelt among them who from day to day vexed the just soul with unjust works." [2 Peter 2:8]

You see, then, how deep an abyss of evils is here discovered, and how great an opportunity for showing mercy and

[259] PE: Luther is thinking here specifically of the Elector.

[260] This refers to the Communion of Saints. Luther, however, expressed a desire to understand this phrase as an assembly or a gathering in his Large Catechism (1529): "The [Apostle's] Creed denominates the holy Christiam Church, *communionem sanctorum*, a communion of saints; for both expressions, taken together, are identical. But formerly the one [the second] expression was not there, and it has been poorly and unintelligibly translated into German *eine Gemeinschaft der Heiligem*, a communion of saints. If it is to be rendered plainly, it must be expressed quite differently in the German idiom; for the word *ecclesia* properly means in German *eine Versammlung*, an assembly. …So also the word *communio*, which is added, ought not to be rendered communion (*Gemeinschaft*), but congregation (*Gemeinde*)…. But to speak correct German, it ought to be *eine Gemeinde der Heiligen* (a congregation of saints), that is, a congregation made up purely of saints, or, to speak yet more plainly, *eine heilige Gemeinde*, a holy congregation." (Concordia Triglotta, 689-91)

vultibus, exesis naribus et oculis aliisque membris sanie et putredine foede consumptis, ita ut animus exhorreat cogitare, nedum sensus ferat intueri? At quid his lachrymandis nostrae carnis et fraternae similitudinis monstris deus intendit, nisi ut oculos mentis nostrae aperiat, quo videamus quanto horribiliore specie anima peccatoris saniem et putredinem suam ostentet, etiam si ipse in purpura et auro et rosis et liliis agat tanquam paradysi filius? At quanti sunt peccatores in mundo ad unum illorum saniosorum comparati!

Haec sane mala infinita tum magnitudine tum multitudine contempta in proximis faciunt, ut nostrum vel unum minutissimum nobis solum et maximum videatur. Sed age, et in corporalibus malis necesse est peiore sint conditione quam nos. Quid, quaeso, potest eis dulce et pure iucundum esse, etiam si omnia quae velint habeant obtineantque, quando conscientia eorum quieta esse non potest? An est malum atrocius quam mordacis conscientiae tumultus? dicit enim Isaias lvij. Impii sicut mare fervens quod quiescere non potest, et redundant fluctus eius in conculcationem et lutum [Isa. 57:20 f.]. Non est pax impiis, dicit dominus deus. Itaque illud Deutro. xxviij. in illis videas: Dabit tibi dominus cor pavidum et deficientes oculos et animam consumptam moerore, et erit vita tua quasi pendens ante te. Timebis die ac nocte, et non credes vitae tuae. Mane dices 'quis det mihi

erfunden ist worden gemacht in ein Gleichniß der Menschen, und es dafür gehalten, als gehörten ihm zu alle menschlichen Dinge, und hat sich also allein mit unsern Uebeln beladen und bemüht.

33. Durch dies Bildniß und Gemüth werden die Heiligen bewegt, für die bösen Menschen, ja, auch für ihre eigenen Feinde zu beten, und alles das zu thun, wie Christus gethan hat, und ihrer eigenen Injurien, Beschwerung oder Gerechtigkeit vergessen und allein sorgfältig sein, wie sie ihre Feinde oder die bösen Menschen möchten von ihren Uebeln ledig machen, von welchen sie unvergleichlich mehr gepeinigt werden, denn durch ihr leiblich Uebel; wie vom Lot St. Peter in der andern Epistel am andern Cap., V. 8., schreibt, „daß er habe gewohnt unter denen, die von Tage zu Tage seine gerechte Seele mit unrechten Werken peinigten." Darum siehest du allhier, wie groß der Abgrund der Uebel und Beschwerung, auch Ursache ist, sich zu erbarmen und ein Mitleiden zu haben mit ihnen und zugleich unseres kleinen Uebels zu vergessen, wenn die Liebe GOttes in uns ist, und wie gar GOtt uns nichts leiden läßt gegen die Beschwerungen, so sie leiden.

34. Daß uns aber unsere Beschwerungen so leichtlich bewegen, ist diese Ursache, daß das Auge des Herzens nicht rein genug ist, damit wir möchten sehen, wie groß die Unehre und Unseligkeit des Menschen ist, so unter der Sünde liegt, das ist, des Menschen,

compassion, as well as for overlooking our own trifling ills, if the love of God dwell in us; since that which God permits us to suffer is as nothing to that which those others endure. But the reason why these things affect us so little is, because the eye of our heart is not clear enough to see how great is the squalor and wretchedness of a man lying in sin; that is, separated from God, and in the possession of the devil. For who is there so hard of heart that he must not sicken at the spectacle of those miserable forms lying at our church doors and in our streets, their faces disputed, and all their members hideously consumed with putrifying sores; so that the mind is horror-struck at the thought and the senses recoil from the sight![261] And what does God intend, through these lamentable specimens of our flesh and brotherhood, but to open the eyes of our mind, that we may see in how much more dreadful a guise the soul of the sinner shows forth its disease and decay, even though he himself go in purple and gold, and tie among lilies and roses, as a very child of paradise! Yet how many sinners are there to one of those wretched creatures? When these evils on the part of our neighbors, so great both in number and degree, are disregarded by us, it follows that our one evil, be it never so trifling, will appear as the sole evil, and the greatest of all.

But even in respect of bodily evils, the wicked are of necessity in a worse plight than we. For what sweet and

[261] AE suggests that Luther had in mind not only "unfortunates" but also "rascals" that would loiter by the churches. The Parish of Leisnig, in its *Fraternal Agreement on the Common Chest of the Entire Assembly of Leisnig* (1523), forbade the begging of monks, stationaries [*stationirer*], or church beggars [*Kirchenbitter*], and stated "anyone not incapacitated by reason of age or illness shall work…" and that the others "shall be supported in suitable fashion" (AE 45, 185-6) This agreement received warm approval from Luther as evidenced by his authorship of a preface for it (AE 45, 169-176). In fact, in the same year *The Fourteen Consolations* was written, Luther, in *An Open Letter to the Christian Nobility*, stated: "He who wishes to be poor should not be rich; and if he wishes to be rich, let him put his hand to the plow and seek his riches in the earth! It is enough if the poor are decently cared for, so that they do not die of hunger or of cold. It is not fitting that one man should live in idleness on another's labor, or be rich and live comfortably at the cost of another's discomfort, according to the present perverted custom; for St. Paul says, 'If a man will not work, neither shall he eat. [2 Thess. 3:10]' " (PE 2, 135) The scriptural basis Luther provided for each of these reactions, assistance, and condemnation, are Deut. 15:11 and 15:4 (*Trade and Usury,* PE 4, 44 |AE 45, 281)

vesperum?' et vespere 'quis mihi det mane?' propter cordis tili formidinem, qua terreberis, et propter ea quae tuis videbis oculis [Deut. 28:65 ff.]. Breviter, qui mala malorum omnia digno affectu videret, sive inimicorum sive amicorum, non solum suorum oblivisceretur et nihil se pati sibi videretur, verum et cum Mose et Paulo Apostolo aestuaret [Ex. 32:32, Rom. 9:3], ut pro eis mori liceret et anathema a Christo fieri ac de libro vitae deleri, ut Ro: ix. scribitur, quo illi liberarentur Hoc enim zelo et incendio Christus ardens pro nobis et mortuus est et ad inferos descendit, nobis exemplum relinquens, ut et nos pro aliorum malis ita simus solliciti, nostrorum penitus obliti, immo nostrorum cupidi.

der von GOtt geschieden und abgesondert und vom Teufel besessen ist. Wer ist nun so hart, der nicht gegen der erbärmlichen Gestalt derer, die vor den Kirchen und auf den Gassen liegen, mit verzehrten und durch Eiter und Fäule abgegangenen Angesichten, Nasen, Augen und andern Gliedmaßen, also erschrecke, daß seinem Gemüth auch daran zu gedenken grauet? will schweigen, daß er sie möchte recht ansehen. Aber was will GOtt durch dieses jämmerliche, grausame, erschreckliche Bildniß unsers Fleisches, und brüderliche Gleichniß anders anzeigen, denn daß er uns dadurch die Augen unsers Gemüths eröffnet, daß wir mögen sehen, mit wieviel erschrecklicherer Gestalt die Seele des Sünders ihren Eiter und Fäule zeige, wenn der Sünder gleich in Sammet, Gold, Rosen und Lilien, gleich als ein Kind des Paradieses, sein Leben zubrächte. O wie viel großer Sünder sind in der Welt gegen derselben gebrechlichen, versaulten Menschen einem zu achten? Wahrlich, diese Uebel, weil sie unermessener Größe und ohne Zahl sind, und in unserm Nächsten verachtet werden, machen sie, daß unserer Uebel eins, auch das allerwenigste, ein einiges und allergrößtes Uebel gehalten wird.

35. Auch muß unsern Feinden von Noth wegen in leiblichen Uebeln übler sein, denn uns; denn was mag ihnen doch lieblich, süß und rein, freudsam sein, wenn sie gleich hätten und erlangten alles, das sie wollten und begehrten, wenn ihr Gewissen nicht mag geruhiget sein? Ist doch kein grausamers Uebel, denn das beißende Unwesen des Gewissens; denn der heilige Prophet Jesaias spricht, Cap. 57, 20. 21.: „Die Ungottesfürchtigen sind wie das ungestüme Meer, welches nicht ruhen mag, und sein Bulge erwachsen zu Zertretung und in ein Leid. GOtt der HErr sagt: Die ungottesfürchtigen Menschen haben keine

pure joy can be theirs, so long as their conscience can find no peace? Or can there be a more terrible evil than the unrest of a gnawing conscience? Isaiah says, "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." [Isaiah 57:20 f.] This also, in Deuteronomy xxviii, applies to them: "The Lord shall give thee a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind: and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life; in the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see." [Deut. 28:65 ff.] In a word, if one regarded all the evils of the wicked in the right spirit, whether they be those of his friends or his foes, he would not only seem to be suffering nothing at all, but he would also, with Moses and the Apostle Paul, [Ex. 32:32, Rom. 9:3] be filled with an hearty desire to die for them, if it might be, and to be blotted out of the book of life, as it is written in Romans ix, that thereby they might be set free. With such zeal and burning was Christ's heart kindled, when He died for us and descended into hell, leaving us an example that we also should be so regardful of the evils of others, and forgetful of our own, nay, rather covetous of evils of our own.

Ruhe.“ Darum sieht man in denselben Menschen diese Meinung, 5 Mos. 28, 65-67.: „Der HErr wird dir geben ein furchtsames, erschrockenes Herz, und abnehmende Augen, und eine Seele, durch Traurigkeit verzehret, und dein Leben wird gleich vor dir hangen: du wirst dich Tag und Nacht fürchten, und deinem Leben nicht vertrauen. Frühe wirst du sprechen: Wer wird mir den Abend geben? und auf den Abend: Wer wird mir den Morgen geben? von wegen der Furcht deines Herzens, damit du würdest erschrecket werden, und um der Dinge willen, so du mit deinen Augen sehen wirst.“

36. Und kürzlich: Wer mit einer rechten christlichen Meinung alle Uebel aller bösen Menschen ansähe, sie wären Feind oder Freund, derselbė vergäße nicht allein seiner eigenen Uebel, und hielt's dafür, daß er nichts leide, sondern er hätte auch eine hitzige Begierde mit sammt dem heiligen Mose, 2 Mos. 2, 32. und St. Paul, daß ihm möchte gebühren für sie zu sterben und vom HErrn Christo verworfen und aus dem Buch des Lebens getilgt zu werden, wie denn vom St. Paul zu den Römern am 9. Cap., V. 3., geschrieben wird, damit je die andern möchten erlöset werden. Mit solcher Liebe und Brand hat Christus, unser HErr, gebrannt, da er um unsertwillen ist gestorben und in die Hölle abgestiegen, und uns ein Exempel oder Vorbild und Unterweisung gelassen, 1 Petr. 2, 21., daß wir auch dermaßen um anderer Leute Uebel, Beschwerung und Widerwärtigkeit sollten sorgfältig sein und unserer eigenen Uebel vergessen, ja, unserer Uebel und Beschwerung begierig sein.

CAPUT SEXTUM
de spectro sexto,

quod est malum dextrum seu ad dextram.

A dextris sunt amici nostri, in quorum malis nostrum malum mitigari etiam S. Petrus docet i. Pe. v. Resistite diabolo fortes in fide, scientes, easdem passiones ei quae in mundo est fraternitati vestrae fieri [I Petr. 5:9]. Ita et Ecclesia orat in precibus, ut exemplis sanctorum provocati virtutem passionis eorum imitemur, Cantatque 'omnes sancti quanta passi sunt tormenta, ut securi pervenirent ad palmam martyrii!' Ex quibus verbis et Canticis Ecclesiae intelligimus, sanctorum festa, memorias, templa, altaria, nomina, imagines ideo celebrari et multiplicari, ut eorum exemplo animemur ad perferenda eadem mala quae ipsi tulerunt: qua ratione nisi colantur, omnis alius cultus eorum superstitione non vacet oportet, ut sunt multi qui celebrant haec omnia, ne malum, quod sancti exemplo et memoria sui ferendum docent, ferant fiantque dissimiles eis, quorum festa habent ut similes fierent.

Verum longe omnium pulcherrime hunc locum Consolationis tractat Apostolus Heb. xij. dicens: Nondum usque ad sanguinem restitistis adversus peccatum repugnantes, et obliti estis consolationis, quae vobis tanquam filiis loquitur dicens 'Fili mi, noli negligere disciplinam domini, neque fatigeris dum ab eo argueris, Quem enim diligit dominus castigat, flagellat autem oninem filium quem recipit'. In disciplina perseverate: tanquam filiis vobis se offert deus. Quis enim filius, quem non corripit pater? Quod si extra disciplinam estis, cuius participes facti sunt omnes, ergo adulteri et non filii estis. Deinde patres quidem carnis nostrae

Der sechste Unterscheid,

von den Uebeln zu der rechten Hand.

37. Auf unserer rechten Seite sind unsere Freunde, in welchen Uebeln St. Peter lehret in der ersten Epistel am 5. Cap., V. 9., daß unser Uebel oder Widerwärtigkeit gelindert wird, und sagt: „Widerstehet dem Teufel, und wisset, daß dieselben Beschwerungen euere Brüder, so in der Welt sein, auch leiden." Also bittet die heilige christliche Kirche in ihren Gebeten, daß wir mögen bewegt werden durch die Vorbilder der Heiligen, und der Stärke ihres Leidens nachfolgen, singet auch also: „Wie viel Marter haben alle Heiligen erlitten, daß sie möchten sicher kommen zu dem Sieg der Marter!" Aus welchen Worten und Gesängen der Kirche wir verstehen, daß der Heiligen Feste, Gedächtnisse, Kirchen, Altäre, Namen und Bildnisse darum geehrt und gemannigfältigt werden, auf daß wir durch ihr Vorbild ermahnt und getröstet werden, die Beschwerung, so sie erlitten, auch zu erleiden. Und wenn die lieben Heiligen mit dieser Weise nicht geehrt werden, so muß die Ehrerbietung, so ihnen erzeigt wird, ohne Mißglauben nichts sein; wie denn fast viel Menschen sind, welche solches alles, wie erzählet, allein darum ehren, daß sie das Uebel, das die Heiligen durch ihr Exempel, Vorbild und Gedächtniß lernen zu erleiden, nicht dürfen leiden, und also den Heiligen ungleich und unähnlich werden, deren Feier oder Fest sie darum haben, daß sie ihnen sollen ähnlich werden.

38. Aber diese Vertröstung handelt auf's allerfeinste St. Paulus zu den Hebräern am 12. Cap., V. 4-11., und sagt: „Ihr habet noch nicht bis auf das

CHAPTER VI

The Sixth Image

The Evil on Our Right Hand

On out right hand are our friends, in the contemplation of whose evils out own will grow light, as St. Peter teaches, I. Peter v, "Resist the devil, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world." [1 Pet. 5:9] Thus also does the Church entreat in her prayers, that provoked by the example of the saints, we may imitate the virtue of their sufferings; and thus she sings,

What torments all the Saints endured,
That they might win the martyr's palm!

From such words and hymns of the Church we learn that the feasts of the saints, their memorials, churches, altars, names, and images, are observed and multiplied to the end that we should be moved by their example to bear the same evils which they also bore. And unless this be the manner of our observance, it is impossible that the worship of saints[262] should be free from superstition. Even as there are many who observe all these things in order to escape the evil which the saints teach us should be borne, and thus to become unlike those whose feasts they keep for the sake of becoming like them.

But the finest treatment of this portion of our consolation is given by the Apostle, when he says, in Hebrews xii: "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh

eruditores habuimus et reverebamur eos, non multo magis patri spirituum obtemperabimus et vivemus? Omnis autem disciplina in praesenti quidem non videtur esse gaudii sed moeroris, postea autem fructum pacatissimum exercitatis per eam reddet iustitiae [Heb. 12:4 ff.]. Haec Paulus. Quis non terreatur his Paulinis verbis, ubi plane diffinit, non esse filios dei qui extra disciplinam dei sunt? Quis vero possit robustius confirmari et efficatius consolari quam qui audiat, eos diligi a domino qui castigantur, esse filios, esse omnium sanctorum communione praeditos, non eos esse solos qui patiuntur? Etiam amabilem disciplinam haec exhortatio vehemens reddet.

Nec patet hic excusandi locus, quod alii mitiora ferant, alii duriora: unicuique enim datur tentatio ad mensuram, non supra vires, ut ps. lxxix. Cibabis nos pane lachrymarum et potum dabis nobis in lachrymis in mensura [Ps. 80:5], quod et Paulus dicit: Fidelis deus, qui non permittit vos tentari ultra quam potestis, sed faciet cum tentatione proventum, ut possitis sustinere [I Cor. 10:13]. ubi [sic] ergo maius malum, ibi plus proventus et auxilii divini, ita ut inaequalitas passionum magis in speciem pareat quam revera sit. Nam et B. Iohannes Baptista, quem hodie decollatum[230] ab Herode recordamur, nonne stupore nos omnes confundit, quod tantus vir, quo maior inter mulieres non surrexit [Matth. 11:11], amicus unicus sponsi [Joh. 3:29], praecursor Christi, maior prophetis omnibus [Matth. 11:9], non saltem publico iudicio oeciditur, non

Blut widerstanden und wider die Sünde gefochten, und habet vergessen der Vertröstung, die mit euch GOtt redet, im Buch der Sprüche am 3. Cap., V. 11. 12., und sagt: Mein Sohn, du sollst die Zucht des HErrn nicht verachten noch müde werden, wenn du von ihm gestrafet würdest; denn wen der HErr liebet, den kasteiet er, aber er geißelt einen jeglichen Sohn, den er annimmt. Bleibet in der Zucht. Denn GOtt erbeut sich gegen euch, als gegen Söhnen. Denn welcher Sohn ist der, den sein Vater nicht strafet? Wenn ihr nun außerhalb der Zucht seid, der alle Menschen sein theilhaftig worden, derhalben seid ihr Uneheliche, und nicht Söhne. Weil wir denn unsere leiblichen Väter haben zu Unterweisern gehabt, und uns vor ihnen entseget und gefürchtet; sollten wir nicht vielmehr dem geistlichen Vater, oder dem Vater, der Geist, gehorsam sein, und seines Gebotes geleben? Aber eine jegliche Zucht oder Unterweisung in der gegenwärtigen Zeit wird nicht für ein friedsam, sondern ein jämmerliches, betrübtes Ding gehalten. Aber darnach wird sie die allerfriedsamste Frucht der Gerechtigkeit denen, die durch sie geübet sein, dagegen geben.“ Also sagt St. Paulus. Wer sollte nun durch diese Worte St. Pauli nicht erschrecket werden? in welchen er klärlich beschließt, daß die GOttes Kinder nicht seien, die außerhalb GOttes Zucht sein. Wer möchte nun kräftiger ermahnt und baß getröstet werden, denn der da hört, daß die von dem HErrn geliebt werden, die kasteiet und gestraft werden, dieselben

unto you as unto children, My son, demise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him; for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their good pleasure; but He for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.” [Heb. 12:4 ff.] These words are Paul’s.[263] Who must not be terrified at these words of Paul, in which he plainly states that they who are without the chastisement of God are not the sons of God! Again, what greater strengthening and what better comfort can there be than to hear that they who are chastened are beloved of the Lord, that they are sons of God, that they have part in the communion of saints, that they are not alone in their sufferings! So forceful an exhortation must make chastisement a thing to be loved.

Nor is there here any room for the excuse that some have lighter, others

[262] Luther no longer held this to be true in 1535.

[230] August 29

[263] This sentence is omitted from PE. Luther would later deny Paul’s authorship of this book of the Bible in his *Preface to the Epistle to the Hebrews* (1522): “That this Epistle is not St. Paul’s, nor any other apostle’s is proved by the fact that it says, in chapter ii, that this doctrine has come to us and remains among us through those who themselves heard it from the Lord. [Heb. 2:3] Thus it is clear that he speaks of the apostles as a disciple to whom this doctrine has come from the apostles, perhaps long after them. For St. Paul, in Galatians I, testifies mightily that he has this Gospel from no man, neither through men, but from God Himself. [Gal. 1:1] … Who wrote it is not known, and will not be known for a while; it makes no difference. We should be satisfied with the doctrine that he bases so constantly on the Scriptures, showing a right fine grasp upon the reading of the Scriptures and the proper way to deal with them.” (PE 6, 476-477)

saltem vel ficta causa (sicut Christus) accusatur nec propter populum sed in carcere propter saltatricem adulterae filiam [Matt. 14:3-11]? Unius huius sancti ignominiosa mors et tradita vita tam viliter, tam indignis modis in manus infensissimae adulterae universum nostrum malum leniat: ubi hic deus, qui talia videre potuit? ubi Christus, qui haec audiens prorsus tacuit? perit ille, ac si ignotus esset deo, hominibus et omnibus creaturis. Quid nos patimur, in quo non dico gloriari sed etiam non confundi oporteat, si huius morti comparatum fuerit? Aut ubi nos parebimus, si nihil pati voluerimus, quando tanti viri etiam mortem tam despectam ferunt immeriti et corpus eorum ludibrio hostium traditur post mortem? Ecce, inquit in Hieremia, quibus non erat iudicium, ut biberent calicem, bibentes bibent, et tu innocens relinqueris? non relinqueris innocens, sed bibens bibes [Jer. 49:12].

Recte ergo Eremita ille, qui, cum singulis annis aegrotasset, uno aliquando anno integro sanus vehementer tristabatur et plorabat, causans quod deus esset eius oblitus et gratiam suam ei negasset. Adeo scilicet necessaria et salutaris est disciplina domini omnibus Christianis.

Videmus autem, quam nihil est quod nos patimur, si sanctorum ungulas, carceres, ferrum, ignem, bestias et infinita tormenta consyderernus, immo si et praesentium nobiscum in hac vita gravissimas diaboli persecutiones patientium ponderemus tentationes. Neque enim desunt, qui acrius et gravius patiantar quam nos tam in spiritu quam corpore.

Dicunt hic aliqui ‘Hoc queror, quod mea passio sanctorum passionibus non comparari possit, quia peccator sum nec dignus illis comparari: illi pro innocentia sua, ego pro peccatis

GOttes Kinder seien und daß sie seien in der Gemeinschaft aller Heiligen? daß auch der nicht allein ist, der da leidet. Diese starke Erinnerung wird auch die Zucht lieblich und angenehm machen.

39. Allhier ist auch nicht Ursache zu entschuldigen, damit, daß etliche geringe und etliche große Beschwerung und Widerwärtigkeit leiden. Denn einem jeglichen wird Anfechtung nach einem Maß gegeben, und nicht über das Vermögen; wie denn im 80. Psalm, V. 6., steht: „Du wirst uns speisen mit dem Brod der Zähren und uns den Trank geben in den Zähren in der Maß“; welches auch Paulus sagt, 1 Cor. 10, 13.: „Der getreue GOtt, der euch nicht läßt weiter und sehrer versuchet und angefochten werden, denn ihr vermöget, sondern er wird mit der Anfechtung die Frucht geben, daß ihr's werdet vermögen zu leiden.“ Je mehr nun des Uebels und der Anfechtung, je mehr Hülfe und göttliches Beistandes ist, also, daß die Ungleichheit der Leiden, Beschwerung und Anfechtung mehr dermaßen scheinet und Gestalt hat, denn sie in der Wahrheit und der That, und an sich selbst ist. Wenn auch der heilige Johannes, der selige Täuser, deß Enthauptung, von Herode geschehen, wir heut bedenken, machet uns alle mit großer Verwunderung schamroth, daß ein solcher theurer Mann, und desgleichen nie ein größerer unter den Kindern der Weiber aufgestanden ist, Matth. 11,9.11., ein einiger Freund des Bräutigams, ein Vorläufer Christi, unsers HErrn, und größer denn alle Propheten, auf's wenigste nicht mit einem offenen Gericht umgebracht, auf's wenigste nicht wie Christus, unser HErr, mit erdichteter Ursache verklaget worden ist, auch nicht um des Volks willen, sondern im Gefängniß, von wegen

heavier, evils to bear. For to every one is given his temptation according to measure, and never beyond his strength. As it is written in Psalm lxxix, “Thou shalt feed us with the bread of tears, and give us for our drink tears in measure”; [264] [Ps. 80:5] and as Paul says, “God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” [1 Cor. 10:13] Where there is, therefore, a greater evil, there is also more of divine help, and an easier way to escape; so that the unequal distribution of sufferings appears to be greater than it actually is. Does not the example of St. John Baptist, whom we commemorate on this day [265] as beheaded by Herod, shame and amaze us all!—that so great a man, than whom there was none greater born of woman, [Matt. 11:11] the special friend of the Bridegroom, [John 3:29] the forerunner of Christ, and more than all the prophets, [Matt. 11:9] should have been put to death, not indeed after a public trial, nor on a feigned charge (as it was with Christ), nor yet for the sake of the people; but in a dungeon, and for the sake of a dancing-girl, daughter of an adulteress! [Matt. 14:3-11] This one Saint's ignominious death, and his life so vilely and shamelessly given over into the hands of his sworn and adulterous enemy, must make all our evil light. Where was God then, that He could look on such things? Where was Christ, Who, hearing of it, was altogether silent? He perished as if unknown to God, and men, and every creature. Compared with such a death, what sufferings have we to boast of; nay, what sufferings of which we must not even be ashamed? And where shall we appear, if we are unwilling to

[264] PE: According to the Vulgate (Douay Version).

[265] August 29

meis patior, ideo nihil mirum illos iucunde omnia pertulisse'. Hoc verbum magnae stultitiae est. Si enim pro peccatis pateris, gaudendum est tibi, quod purgantur peccata tua: an non et sancti fuerunt peccatores? Sed Herodis et latronis sinistri similem te esse formidas? Non es, si patiens fueris: latronem enim sinistrum et dextrum quis discrevit nisi patientia et impatientia? Si es peccator, bene: et latro erat peccator, sed patientia iustitiae et sanctitatis gloriam meruit. Ita et tu fac similiter [Luc. 10:37]. Non enim pati potes, nisi aut pro peccatis aut pro iustitia: utraque passio sanctificat et beatum facit, si dilexeris eam. Quare nulla est reliqua excusatio. Denique quam cito confessus fueris te iuste pati pro peccatis, iustus es et sanctus sicut latro dexter. Confessio enim peccati, quia veritas est, iustificat et sanctificat, ac sic mox in momento huius confessionis iam non pro peccatis sed pro innocentia pateris. Iustus enim non patitur nisi innocenter. At iustus factus es confessione meritae passionis et peccatorum tuorum. Quare et vere et digne tua passio comparatur passionibus sanctorum, sicut vere et digne tua confessio peccatorum comparatur confessioni sanctorum: una enim omnium veritas, omnium confessio peccatorum, omnium passio malorum et vera communio sanctorum in onmibus et per omnia.

der Tänzerin, der Ehebrecherin Tochter.

40. Dieses einigen Heiligen schmählicher Tod, und so schnödiglich ansgegeben Leben, mit so unwürdiger schändlicher Weise, in die Hände der allerschändlichsten Ehebrecherin, soll alle unsere Anfechtung, Widerwärtigkeit und Beschwerung erlindern und geringern. Wo ist da GOtt gewesen, der dermaßen böse Uebelthat hat mögen sehen? Wo ist da gewesen der HErr Christus, der dies gehört und gar dazu geschwiegen hat? und der heilige Täufer darunter umkommen, als wäre er GOtt, den Menschen und allen Creaturen unbekannt. Was leiden wir nun, deß wir uns nicht sollten rühmen, ja, deß wir uns nicht sollten schämen, so es gegen diesem Tode geachtet und verglichen wird? Oder, wo werden wir hinkommen, wenn wir gar nichts leiden wollen, weil so vortreffliche Männer auch so schändliche Tode unverdient geduldiglich gelitten haben, und der Leichnam nach ihrem Tode den Feinden zu Spott und Verachtung überreicht und übergeben wird.

41. „Nehmet wahr", sagt der HErr im heiligen Propheten Jeremia, Cap. 49, 12.: die das Urtheil nicht gehabt haben, den Kelch zu trinken, die werden ihn trinkend trinken, und du wirst unschuldig und unversehrt übergangen? Du wirst nicht unschuldig gelassen werden, sondern trinkend trinken." Darum hat der Einsiedel recht gethan, der, nachdem er jährlich krank gewesen war, und einst ein ganz Jahr über gesund blieben, war er sehr betrübt und traurig und weinete, darum, wie er sagte, daß GOtt sein vergessen und ihm seine Gnade versagt, gewegert und abgeschlagen hat. So gar vonnöthen und heilwärtig ist die Zucht oder Strafe des HErrn allen christgläubigen Menschen.

endure any suffering, when such a man endured so shameful a death, and so undeserved, and his body, after death, was given up to the insults of his enemies! "Behold," He saith in Jeremiah, "behold, they whose judgment was not to drink of the cup have assuredly drunken: and art thou he that shall altogether go unpunished? thou shalt not go unpunished, but thou shalt surely drink of it." [Jer. 49:12]

Therefore, that hermit, who was used to fall ill every year, did well to weep and lament, when for one whole year he found himself in sound health, because, he said, God had forsaken him and withdrawn His grace from him.[266] So necessary and so salutary is the Lord's chastening for all Christians.

We see, then, that all our sufferings are as nothing, when we consider the nails, dungeons, irons, faggots, wild beasts, and all the endless tortures of the saints; nay, when we ponder the afflictions of men now living, who endure in this life the most grievous persecutions of the devil. For there is no lack of men who are suffering more sharp and bitter pains than we, in soul as well as in body.

But now some will say, "This is my complaint, that my suffering cannot be compared with the sufferings of the saints; because I am a sinner, and not worthy to be compared with them. They, indeed, suffered because of their innocence, but I suffer because of my sins. It is no wonder, then, that they so blithely bore all." That is a very stupid saying. If you suffer because of your sins, then you ought to rejoice that your sins are being purged away. And, besides, were not the saints, too, sinners? But do you fear that you are like Herod, and the thief on Christ's left

[266] Previous editors suggest a reference to Jerome's *Lives of the Hermits*.

42. Aber wir sehen, wie gar das, so wir leiden, nichts ist, so wir der lieben Heiligen Peinigung, Gefängniß, Schwert, Feuer, grausame wilde Thiere und unzählige Marter betrachten; ja, wenn wir auch die allerschwerste und heftigste Verfolgung der Menschen, die bei uns sein, so sie von dem Teufel erleiden, bedenken, bewegen und ermessen; denn es sein wohl, die viel mehr am Leib und der Seele, denn wir, leiden. Nun sprechen etliche: Das klage ich, daß mein Leiden der lieben Heiligen Leiden nicht mag verglichen werden, denn ich bin ein Sünder und nicht würdig, daß ich ihnen verglichen werde. Sie sein um ihrer Unschuld willen gemartert worden, aber ich leide für meine Sünde; darum ist es nicht Wunder, daß sie all ihr Leiden und Beschwerung willigklich und herzlich gerne erlitten haben. O das ist ein Wort großer Thorheit. Denn, leidest du um deiner Sünde willen, so sollst du dich erfreuen, daß deine Sünden von dir gereiniget und genommen werden. Meinst du nicht, daß die Heiligen auch Sünder gewesen seien? Aber du fürchtest und besorgest dich, daß du dem Herodes und dem Schächer auf der linken Hand gleich seiest. Du bist ihnen nicht gleich, wenn du geduldig bist.

43. Denn was unterscheidet und sondert ab den rechten und linken Schächer, denn die Geduld? Bist du ein Sünder? ist recht, denn der rechte Schächer war auch ein Sünder; aber mit der Geduld hat er erlangt die Ehre der Gerechtigkeit und Heiligkeit. Darum kannst du nichts leiden, denn etwan für die Gerechtigkeit, oder für die Sünde. Und dieselben Leiden beide machen den Menschen heilig und selig, wenn er sie lieb hat. Darum hast du

hand [Luke 23:39-43]?[267] You are not, if you have patience. For what was it that distinguished the thief on the left hand from him on the right but the patience of the one and the impatience of the other? If you are a sinner, well; the thief, too, was a sinner; but by his patience he merited[268] the glorious reward of righteousness and holiness. Go, and do thou likewise. [Luke 10:37] For you can suffer nothing except it be either on account of your sins or on account of your righteousness; and both kinds of suffering sanctify and save, if you will but love them. And so there is no excuse left. In short, just as soon as you have confessed that you are suffering on account of your sins, you are righteous and holy, even as the thief on the right hand. For the confession of sins, because it is the truth,[269] justifies and sanctifies, and so, in the very moment of this confession, you are suffering no longer on account of your sins, but on account of your innocence. For the righteous man always suffers innocently. But you are made righteous by the confession of your merited sufferings and of your sins. And so your sufferings may truly and worthily be compared with the sufferings of the saints, even as your confession may truly and worthily be compared with the confession of the saints. For one is the truth of all, one the confession of all sins, one the suffering of all evils, and one the true communion of saints in all and through all.[270]

[267] While Luke does not specify which thief was the penitent thief, tradition has chosen for him to be on the right of Christ.
[268] An obvious effect of Roman Catholic theology which Luther chose to not revise.
[269] PE: Cf. *A Discussion of Confession*.
[270] PE: Luther might have considerably revised this whole paragraph.

gar keine Entschuldigung. Auch sobald du bekennest, daß du billig Widerwärtigkeit für die Sünde leidest, so bist du gerecht und heilig, wie der rechte Schächer. Denn das Bekenntniß der Sünde, weil es die Wahrheit ist, macht den Menschen gerecht und heilig, und sobald und im Nu desselben Bekenntnisses leidet er nicht für die Sünde, sondern für die Unschuld. Denn der gerechte Mensch leidet allezeit nicht anders, denn unschuldiglich. Aber der Mensch wird gerecht durch die Bekenntniß des verdienten Leidens, das ist, dadurch wird der Mensch gerecht oder rechtfertig, wenn er bekennet, daß er seine Anfechtung, Leiden oder Beschwerung mit seinen Sünden verdient hat. Darum wird dein Leiden wahrhaftiglich und würdiglich der lieben Heiligen Leiden verglichen, eben als wahrhaftiglich und würdiglich dein Bekenntniß der Sünde verglichen wird dem Bekenntniß oder der Beichte der Heiligen. Denn es ist eine einige Wahrheit aller heiligen Menschen, eine einige Beichte und Bekenntniß der Sünde aller heiligen Menschen, und ein einiges Leiden der Uebel und Widerwärtigkeit aller heiligen Menschen, und eine wahrhaftige, einträchtige Gemeinschaft aller heiligen und gerechtfertigten Menschen in allen und durch alle Dinge.

CAPUT SEPTIMUM
de septimo spectro,

quod est malum supernum seu supra nos.

Der siebente Unterscheid,

von den obern Nebeln.

CHAPTER VII

The Seventh Image

The Supernal Evil, or the Evil Above Us

Ultimo levandum est cor sursum et ascendendum in montem myrrhae cum sponsa [Cant. 4:6]. Hic est Ihesus Christus crucifixus, caput omnium sanctorum, princeps omnium patientium, de quo multi multa et omnes

44. Zum letzten, soll man das Herz in die Höhe erheben, und mit der Braut steigen auf den Myrrhenberg, Hohel. 4, 6. Das ist unser gekreuzigter HErr und Seligmacher JEsus Christus, das Haupt aller Heiligen und der Fürst

Finally, let us lift up our hearts,[271] and ascend with the Bride into the mountain of myrrh. [Song of Sol. 4:6] This is Jesus Christ the Crucified, Head of all saints, and Prince of all sufferers; of Whom many have written many

[271] There is a similarity here to the words recited before the Lord's Prayer, the *Sursum Corda*, reflected in the translation here.

omnia, sicut decet, scripserunt. Huius memoria sponsae commendatur, ubi dicitur: Pone me ut signum super cor tuum et sicut signaculum super brachium tuum [Cant. 8:6]. Huius agni sanguis in limine signatus arcet percussorem angelum [Ex. 12:7, 13]. Ab hoc commendatur sponsa, quod coma eius sit sicut purpura regis [Cant. 7:5] (id est, meditatio eius rubet passionis Christi memoria). Hoc est lignum, quod Moses iussus est mittere in aquas Marath, id est amaras passiones, et dulces factae sunt [Ex. 15:23 ff.]. Nihil est quod haec passio non dulcoret, etiam mortem, sicut dicit sponsa: Labia eius lilia, stillantia myrrham primam [Cant. 5:13]. quae [sic] proportio liliorum et labiorum, cum haec rubeant et illa albicent? utique mystica loquitur, quod verba Christi candidissima sint et purissima, in quibus nihil cruentae amaritudinis aut livoris, sed suavia et mitia, quibus tamen stillet ac persuadeat primam et electam myrrham (id est amarissimam mortem): potentia sunt haec purissima labia ac dulcissima amarissimam mortem, quae (sicut prima myrrha) omnem peccati putorem semel tollit, dulcem, nitidam, candidam acceptabilemque reddere. Quo modo fiet hoc? Nempe dum audis Ihesum Christum filium dei suo sanctissimo contactu omnes passiones, ipsam adeo mortem consecrasse ac sanctificasse, maledictionem benedixisse, ignominiam glorificasse, paupertatem ditasse, Ita ut mors vitae ianua, maledictio benedictionis origo, ignominia gloriae parens esse cogantur. Iam quomodo potes esse tam durus et ingratus, qui non etiam optes et diligas universas passiones, Christi purissima et sanctissima carne et sanguine tinctas, sanctificatas, innoxias, salutares, benedictas, beatas tibi redditas?

oder Oberste aller Leidenden, von welchem viel heiliger Lehrer viel Dings und alle Dinge, wie sich's ziemet, geschrieben haben. Das Gedächtniß dieser Braut wird gelobet im Buch der Gesänge am 8. Capitel, V. 6., da gesagt wird: „Setze mich gleich wie ein Siegel oder Petschaft über dein Herz, und wie ein Petschaft auf deinen Arm."

45. Dieses Lammes Blut, an das Geschwell gestrichen, hat den schlagenden Engel abgeweiset, 2 Mos. 12,7.13.; von dem wird die Braut gelobet. Darum, daß ihr Haar ist wie der Purpur des Königs, Hohel. 7, 5., das ist, ihre Betrachtung ist roth von dem Gedächtniß des Leidens Christi, unsers HErrn. Das ist das Holz, das dem Mose ist geheißen worden, in das Wasser Marath zu senken oder zu werfen, 2 Mos. 15, 23-25., das ist, in die bitteren und herben Leiden zu tunken, und dasselbe Bittere ist davon süße worden. Denn kein Lei den und Beschwerung ist so bitter, das dies Leiden Christi, unsers HErrn, nicht süß machte, auch den Tod selbst; wie die Braut spricht, Hohel. 5, 13.: „Seine Leszen sind Lilien, die da triesen sehr viel Myrrhen." Was ist nun für ein Gleichniß der Lilien und Leszen, so die Lefzen roth und die Lilien weiß sein? Wahrlich, die geistliche Braut redet desselben Orts mit verborgener Rede, darum, daß die Worte Christi, unsers HErrn und Seligmachers, auf's allerweißeste und reinste sein, in welchen auch keine Bitterkeit oder Ungüte, sondern lauter Güte, Sänfte und Süßigkeit ist. Aber es sein dennoch solche Worte, mit welchen er abträufet oder von sich gibt die erste, fürnehmste und auserwählte Myrrhen, das ist, mit welchen er uns ermahnet, und kecklich zu dem Tode führet und unterweiset.

46. Denn diese allerreinsten, allersüßesten und allerlieblichsten Lefzen

things, and all all things, as it is meet.[272] His memory is commended to the Bride, when it is said, "Set Me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm." [Song of Sol. 8:6] The blood of this Lamb, signed upon the threshold, wards off the destroying angel. [Ex. 12:7, 13] By Him is the Bride praised, because "the hair of her head is as the king's purple"; [Song of Sol. 7:5] that is, her meditation glows red with the remembrance of the Passion of Christ. This is that tree which Moses was commanded to cast into the waters of Marah (that is, the bitterness of suffering), and they were made sweet. [Ex. 15:23 ff.] There is nothing that this Passion cannot sweeten, not even death itself; as the Bride saith, "His lips are lilies, dropping sweet-smelling myrrh." [Song of So. 5:13] What resemblance is there between lips and lilies, since lips are red and lilies white? But she says this in a mystery, signifying that the words of Christ are most fair and pure, and that there is in them naught of blood-red bitterness or guile; nevertheless, in them He drops precious and chosen myrrh, that is, the bitterness of death. These most pure lips and sweet have power to make the bitterest death sweet and fair and bright and dear,—death that, like precious myrrh, removes at once all of sin's corruption.

How does this come to pass? When, forsooth, you hear that Jesus Christ, God's Son, hath, by His most holy touch, consecrated and hallowed all sufferings, even death itself, hath blessed the curse, glorified shame, and enriched poverty, so that death has been made a door to life, curse a fount of blessing, and shame the mother of glory: how can you then be so hard and ungrateful as not to long for and to love all manner of sufferings, now that

[272] PE: This seems to refer to the writers of the Holy Scriptures.

Si enim tactu suae mundissimae carnis omnes aquas sanctificavit ad baptismum, immo omnem creaturam, quanto magis tactu eiusdem suae mundissimae carnis et sanguinis omnem mortem, omnes passiones, omnes iniurias, omnia maledicta, omnem ignominiam sanctificavit ad baptismum spiritus seu sanguinis! sicut dicit de eodem passionis baptismo Luce xij. Baptismo habeo baptisari, et quomodo coartor, donec perficiciatur [Luc. 12:50]! vides quantum coartatur, quam anhelat, quam sitit passiones et mortem sanctificare et amabiles reddere: vidit enim passionibus nos terreri, vidit mortem expavesci et horreri. Ideo sicut piissimus pastor et fidelissimus medicus huic malo nostro modum positurus festinat et artatur mori et tactu suo easdem nobis commendare, Ita ut mors Christiani perinde sit habenda, sicut aeneus Mosi serpens [Num. 21:8 f.], qui speciem quidem serpentis per omnia servat, sed totus est sine vita, sine motu, sine veneno, sine morsu. Ita iusti visi sunt oculis insipientium mori, illi autem sunt in pace, similes sumus morientibus, nec alia est species nostrae mortis quam aliorum, res tamen alia est: nobis enim mortua est mors. Ita et omnes aliae passiones similes sunt passionibus aliorum, sed specie tantum, verum reipsa passiones nostrae sunt impassibilitatis initia, sicut mors initium vitae. Atque hoc est quod Iohan. viij. dicit: Qui sermonem meum servabit, non videbit mortem inaeternum [Iohn. 8:51]. Quomodo non videbit? quia moriens vitam incipit, ita prae vita, quam videt, mortem videre non potest. Hic enim nox sicut dies illuminatur [Ps. 139:12], dum clarior est lux vitae incipientis quam mortis desinentis.

vermögen den allerbittersten Tod, gleichwie die ersten Myrrhen allen Stank der Sünde, wegzunehmen, süße, weiß und angenehm zu machen. Wie geschieht denn das? Also geschieht es: Wenn du hörest, daß JEsus Christus, unser HErr und Seligmacher, der Sohn GOttes, durch seine allerheiligste Berührung alle Leiden, ja den Tod auch selbst geweihet und geheiliget hat, und die Vermaledeiung gebenedeiet, die Schande und Unehre geehret, und die Armuth reich gemacht, also, daß der Tod des Lebens Thür oder Eingang, die Maledeiung der Ursprung der Gebenedeiung, und die Schande eine Mutter der Ehre zu sein gezwungen werden. Wie magst du nun so hart und undankbar und grob sein, daß du nicht wolltest wünschen und lieben alles Leiden, von und mit dem allerreinsten und allerheiligsten Fleisch und Blut Christi, unsers lieben HErrn, dir zu Heil und Gut gefärbet, geheiliget, unschädlich, heilsam, gebenedeiet und selig gemacht. Denn hat Christus, unser HErr, durch Berührung seines allerreinsten Fleisches zu der Taufe alle Wasser, ja, alle Creaturen geheiligt; wie viel mehr hat er mit der Berührung seines allerheiligsten Fleisches und Blutes allen Tod, alle Leiden, alle Beleidigung, alle Vermaledeiung, und alle Schande und Unehre zu der Taufe des Geistes oder des Blutes geheiliget. Wie denn der HErr selbst sagt, Luc. 12, 50., von derselben Taufe des Leidens: „Ich muß getauft werden, und wie werde ich geängstet, bis sie verbracht wird."

47. Siehest du es, wie sich der HErr ängstet, wie hitzig, wie begierig und geneigt er ist, die Leiden und den Tod zu heiligen und lieblich zu machen. Denn er hat gesehen, daß wir durch Leiden und Beschwerung erschrecket werden. Er hat gesehen, daß man sich vor dem

they have been touched by Christ's most pure and holy flesh and blood, and made unto you holy, harmless, wholesome, blessed, and full of joy?

For if Christ, by the touch of His most innocent flesh, has hallowed all waters unto baptism, yea, and every creature besides; how much more has He, by the same contact of His most innocent flesh and blood, hallowed every form of death, all suffering and loss, every curse and shame, unto the baptism of the Spirit, or the baptism of blood![273] Even as He saith of this same baptism of His Passion, in Luke xii, "I have a baptism to be baptised with; and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!" [Luke 12:50] Behold, how He is straitened, how He pants and thirsts, to sanctify suffering and death, and make them things to be loved! For He sees how we stand in fear of suffering. He marks how we tremble and shrink from death. And so, like a godly pastor or faithful physician,[274] He hastens to set bounds to this our evil, and is impatient to die and by His contact to commend suffering and death unto us. So that the death of a Christian is henceforth to be regarded as the brazen serpent of Moses, [Num. 21:8] which indeed hath in all things the appearance of a serpent, yet is quite without life, without motion, without venom, without sting. Even so the righteous seem, in the sight of the unwise, to die; but they are in peace. We resemble them that die, nor is the outward appearance of our dying unlike that of others; but the thing itself is different, because for us death is dead. In like manner all our sufferings are like the sufferings of other men; but it is only in the appearance. In reality our sufferings are the beginning of our freedom from suffering, as our death is

[273] PE: A reference to the threefold baptism, commonly accepted, viz., (1) *fluminia*, (2) *flaminis*, (3) *sanguinis*; that is, (1) the Sacrament of baptism, (2) the baptism of the Spirit, or repentance, and (3) the baptism of blood, or martyrdom.

[274] Both men of faith and men of science were in attendance upon Frederick at this time of his illness. See the introduction.

Haec omnibus qui credunt in Christum rata sunt, secus incredulis.

Proinde si tunicam Christi, vasa, hydrias et quaecunque tandem Christus tetigit et quibus usus est pro dulcissimis reliquiis tanquam suo tactu consecratis exoscularis, diligis, amplecteris, Cur non multo magis poenas, mala mundi, ignominiam et mortem non solum eius tactu consecrata sed etiam sanguine eius purissimo tincta et benedicta, deinde voluntate cordis et summa coartante charitate amplexata diligis, amplecteris, oscularis, praesertim cum in his multo sint tibi maiora merita, praemia, bona, quam in illis reliquiis, Siquidem in his victoria mortis et inferni et omnium peccatorum tibi paratur, in illis nequaquam. O si cor liceat Christi intueri, quando in cruce pendens artabatur, ut mortem redderet mortuam et contemptibilem, quam pro timidis et mortem poenasque horrescentibus ardenter et suaviter mortem et poenas amplexatus fuit, quam libenter hunc calicem aegrotis praebibit, ut bibere et ipsi non vereremur, dum nihil illi mali sed tantum resurgendo boni contigisse cernimus, sine dubio fieret illa prima myrrha, stillantibus eius labiis et verbis Christi eam commendantibus, iucundissima et dulcissima sicut odor et species liliorum. Sic et Petrus i. Pe. iiij. Christo in carne passo et vos eadem cogitatione armamini [I Petr. 4:1], Paulus Heb. xij. Recogitate eum, qui talem sustinuit a peccatoribus contra seipsum contradictionem, ut non fatigemini animis vestris deficientes [Heb. 12:3].

Itaque si in prioribus spectris adhuc infra et iuxta nos positis malum didicimus tolerare patienter, certe in hoc ultimo iam supra et extra nos positi, in

Tode entsetzet und scheuet. Darum hat er als ein allergütigster Hirt und allergetreuester Arzt unserm Uebel und Beschwerung ein Ende zu setzen geeilet, und sich emsiglich bemühet, daß er stürbe, und die Leiden uns mit seiner Berührung preisete und einbildete. Also, daß man eines christgläubigen Menschen Tod gleich halten sollte, wie die eherne Schlange Mosis, 4 Mos. 21, 8. 9., welche allenthalben eine Gestalt hatte, wie eine rechte Schlange, aber dennoch nirgends weder Leben noch Bewegung, weder Gift noch Biß hatte. Also haben es die Narren geachtet in ihren Augen dafür, als wären die heiligen und gerechten Menschen gestorben, aber die Heiligen sind im Frieden.

48. Also sind wir Christen auch gleich denen Leuten, die da sterben, und unser Tod hat keine andere Gestalt, denn der Tod der andern Menschen; aber der Tod an ihnen ist anders, denn der Tod ist uns gestorben. Also auch andere Leiden sein gleich dem Leiden der andern Menschen, aber allein mit der Gestalt. Denn an ihnen selbst sein unsere Leiden Anheber der Unleidlichkeit, und daß wir hinfort kein Leiden mehr werden haben, wie unser Tod ist der Anfang des Lebens. Und das ist das, so der HErr sagt, Joh. am 8. Cap., V. 51.: „Wer meine Rede wird halten, der wird den Tod nicht sehen in Ewigkeit." Wie wird er den Tod nicht sehen? Denn wenn er stirbt, so hebt er das Leben an; also, daß er vor dem Leben, so er sieget, den Tod nicht mag sehen. Denn allhier wird die Nacht so klar, hell und lichte als der Tag, in dem, daß das Licht und der Schein des anhebenden Lebens viel klarer und heller ist, denn der aufhörende oder sich endende Tod. Und dies alles begegnet eigentlich denen

the beginning of our life. This is that which Christ saith in John viii, "If a man keep my saying he shall never see death." [John 8:51] How shall he not see it? Because when he dies, he begins to live, and so he cannot see death for the life that he sees. For here the night shines as the day; [Ps. 139:12] since the life that breaks upon him is brighter far than departing death. These things are assured to all who believe in Christ, to the unbelieving they are not.

Therefore, if you kiss, caress, and embrace, as most sweet relics,[275] consecrated by His touch, the robe of Christ,[276] the vessels, waterpots, and what things soever He touched and used; why will you not the rather caress, embrace, and kiss the pains and evils of this world, disgrace and death, which He not only hallowed by His touch, but sprinkled and blessed with His most holy blood, yea, embraced with willing heart, and great constraining love?[277] The more, since in these there are for you far greater merits, rewards, and blessings than in those relics; for in them there is offered to you the victory over death, and hell, and all sins, but in those relics nothing at all. O could we but see the heart of Christ, when, hanging on the Cross, He was so eager to slay death, and hold it up to our contempt! With what grace and ardor He embraced death and pain for us timid ones, who shrink from them! How willingly He first drinks this cup for us sick ones, that we may not dread to drink it after Him! For we see that naught of evil befell Him, but only good, in His resurrection. Could we see this, then doubtless that precious myrrh, dropping from Christ's lips, and commended by His words, would grow most sweet and pleasant unto us,

[275] See the introduction.

[276] "The Holy Coat of Trier" was believed to be the seamless coat of Christ (John 19:23-24). It was first displayed there in 1512 with the accompanying legend that Empress Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great, had gifted it to the cathedral (PE 2, 130, n. 1).

[277] PE: Cf. Letter to George Leiffer, 15 April, 1516. See M. A. Cueriz, *The Letters of M. Luther*, p. 7.

Christum rapti, omnibus malis superiores facti, non modo toleranda nobis sunt, sed amanda, optanda, quaerenda. Atque ab hoc affectu quo quisque remotior est, eo minus in ipso Christi passio valet, sicuti fit in iis qui signis et armis Christi utuntur adversus mala et mortem, ne patiantur neve moriantur, omnino contrariis studiis Cruci et morti Christi. Quare in hoc septimo spectro necesse est absorberi et consumi quicquid malorum passi fuerimus, ut iam non modo non doleat sed et delectet, si tamen imago ista penetret corda nostra et insedeat animi interiori affectui.

Haec de priore Tabella.

Sequitur posterior.

Menschen, die an den HErrn Christum glauben; aber den Ungläubigen widerfähret diese Gnade nicht.

49. Weil wir nun den Rock unsers lieben HErrn, die Gefäße, Wasserkrüge und alles das, so Christus berührt und deß er sich gebraucht, für allerlieblichste Heiligthümer, als durch seine Berührung geheiligt, küssen, lieben und ehren; warum wollten wir nicht viel mehr die Pein, Beschwerung der Welt, Schande und Unehre und den Tod, nicht allein durch seine Berührung geheiligt, sondern auch mit seinem allerreinsten Blut bestrichen und gebenedeit, und folgends durch seinen Willen und zwingender allerhöchsten Liebe umgeben, lieben, küssen und ehren, zuvor, weil wir darinnen viel größern Verdienst, Belohnung und Güter, denn in dem andern Heiligthum haben. Denn in diesem Heiligthum des Leidens erlangen wir den Sieg und die Ueberwindung des Todes und der Hölle und aller Sünde, aber in dem andern Heiligthum in keinem Wege. O daß man das Herz Christi, unsers lieben HErrn, da er am heiligen Kreuz gehangen ist, möchte sehen, da er sich damit bemüht und geängstet hat, den Tod zu tödten und verächtlich zu machen, wie hitziglich, willig und freundlich er für die furchtsamen, blöden, verzagten Menschen, die sich für Leiden, Marter, Pein und dem Tode fürchten, den Tod und die Pein angenommen und wie gerne er diesen Kelch oder Trunk den Kranken gebracht oder zugetrunken hat, daß wir uns auch nicht davor entsetzen sollten, diesen Trunk zu nehmen und thun, weil wir sehen, daß ihm nichts Böses, sondern Gutes durch die Auferstehung daraus begegnet hat. Ohne

even as the beauty and fragrance of lilies. Thus saith also St. Peter, I. Peter iv, "Forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind." [1 Pet. 4:1] And St. Paul, Hebrews xii, "Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." [Heb. 12:3]

If we have learned, in the foregoing images, beneath us and above us, to bear our evils with patience, surely in this last, lifted above and out of ourselves, caught up unto Christ, and made superior to all evils, we ought not only to bear with them, but to love them, desire them, and seek them out. Whoever is yet far from this state of mind, for him the Passion of Christ has little value; as it is with those who use the sign and arms of Christ[278] to ward off evils and death, that so they may neither suffer pain nor endure death, which is altogether contrary to the cross and death of Christ. Hence, in this image, whatever evils we may have to bear must be swallowed up and consumed, so that they shall not only cause us no pain, but even delight us; if indeed this image find its way into our heart, and fix itself in the inmost affections of our mind

So much for the first table.

The second follows.[279]

[278] The sign of the cross, which was believed to affirm Christ's power and therefore ward off evil spirits and demons. In *A Serom on Preparing to Die* (1519) Luther sincerely utilizes this practice: "But then the devil comes along and whispers into your ear, 'But suppose you received the sacraments unworthily and through your unworthiness robbed yourself of such grace?' In that even cross yourself and do not let the question of worthiness or unworthiness assail you…" (AE 42, 110)

[279] These final two sentences are omitted from PE.

Zweifel durch diese Weise werden die ersten Myrrhen, die uns durch die Lefzen des HErrn Christi, so sie triefen, gelobt werden auf's allersüßeste und allerlieblichste, wie die Gestalt, Farbe und der Geruch der Lilien.

50. Wie auch St. Peter in der ersten Epistel am 4. Cap., V. 1., sagt: „Wie Christus im Fleisch oder an seinem Leichnam gelitten hat, so sollt ihr auch mit solchen Gedanken gewappnet und verwahret werden.“ Und St. Paul zu den Hebräern, Cap. 12, 3.: „Gedenket an den, der eine solche Widerrede von den Sündern wider sich selbst erlitten hat, auf daß ihr nicht sollt müde und an eurem Gemüth matt oder ohnmächtig werden.“ Derhalben, so wir in dem vorigen Bildniß, unter und neben uns gestellt, bisher gelernt haben Uebel, Beschwerung und Widerwärtigkeit geduldiglich zu leiden: wahrlich, in diesem letzten Uebel sollen wir, als die, so über und außerhalb uns sein, in Christum, unsern HErrn, erhaben und entzückt werden, und als die allen Uebeln zu viel und zu hoch sein, und allein alle Uebel erleiden, sondern auch lieben, wünschen und suchen.

51. Und so viel ferner ein jeglicher Mensch von dieser Meinung, Gemüth und Sinn ist, so viel weniger Kraft und Macht hat in ihm das Leiden Christi, unsers lieben HErrn, wie denn in dem geschieht, so die Wappen Christi, unsers lieben HErrn, wider die Uebel, Widerwärtigkeit, Beschwerung und den Tod gebrauchen, damit sie nichts dürfen leiden, oder nicht sterben, mit der Meinung und dem Vornehmen, das dem Kreuz und Tode Christi, unsers HErrn, ganz entgegen ist. Darum muß in diesem siebenten Bildniß ertränket und verzehrt werden alles das Uebel, Leid, Beschwerung und Widerwärtigkeit, so wir erlitten haben, also, daß sie uns nicht mehr wehe thun, sondern uns lieben und gefallen, wenn anders dieses Bildniß in unsere Herzen

eindringt und sich setzt in die innerste Meinung und Bewegung des Gemüths. Und das ist das erste oder vorderste Theil der Tafel. Nun folgt der andere oder letzte Theil.

Alteri Tabellae sua quoque spectra septem danda sunt, contraria prioribus, quorum primum de bono interno, Secundum de futuro, Tercium de praeterito, Quartum de inferno, Quintum de sinistro, Sextum de dextro, Septimum de superno.

CAPUT PRIMUM
de spectro primo,

quod est bouum internum.

Et quis vel sola haec bona numeret, quae quisque in sua persona possidet? Primo corporis dotes quantae sunt! forma, robur, valetudo, vivacitas sensus, quibus in masculo accedit nobilissimus sexus, quo multis rebus tum privatis tum publicis gerendis et egregiis facinoribus idoneus est, a quibus mulier aliena est. Quid vero magni est, si his donis optimis decem, viginti, triginta annis cum voluptate dono dei sis usus et in uno horum aliquando vel decem diebus labores? Nebulones proverbio dicunt 'Es ist umb ein bose stund zuthun' et iterum 'Ein gutt stund ist eyner posen werdt'. Quid nobis faciendum, qui multas horas bonas accipimus et ne una quidem ferre volumus malum? Videmus ergo, quantis obruimur bonis dei, et quam paucis vix tangamur malis, saltem nostrum plurimi.

His bonis non contentus optimus deus adiicit divitias, copias omnium

Der andere Theil dieser Tafel.

52. Sollen ihr sieben Bildnisse auch gegeben werden, die den vorigen oder ersten Bildnissen widerwärtig oder entgegen sein. Unter welchen die erste Bildniß ist das innerliche Gut. Die andere Bildniß das zukünftige Gut. Die dritte Bildniß das vergangene Gut. Die vierte Bildniß das untere Gut, oder das Gut unter uns. Die fünfte Bildniß das Gut zu der linken Hand. Die sechste Bildniß das Gut zu der rechten Hand. Und die siebente Bildniß das obere Gut, oder das Gut über uns.

Der erste Unterscheid,

von dem innerlichen Gut.

53. Wer vermöchte die Güter zu erzählen, die ein jeglicher Mensch in seiner Person hat und besitzt? Erstlich, wohl groß sein die Zierheiten und Gaben des Leibes, die Schöne, die Stärke, die Gesundheit und die kräftige Sinnlichkeit. Dazu in denen Mannspersonen auch das alleredelste Geschlecht kommt, dadurch er zu viel gemeinen, großen und sonderlichen Sachen zu führen und auszurichten, und zu vortreff lichen Thaten tüchtig und geschickt ist, deren die Weiber mangeln. Nun, was Großes ist das, wenn du durch GOttes Gabe dich dieser allerbesten Gaben zehn, zwanzig oder dreißig Jahr gebrauchet hättest, und an derselben einem zuweilen einen Tag oder zehn schwach oder krank bist, und Gebrech oder Beschwerung leidest? Also ist auch ein Sprüchwort der Buben: Es ist um eine böse Stunde zu thun. Item: Eine gute Stunde ist einer bösen werth. Was sollen wir nun thun,

PART II

The second part also consists of seven images, answering to the first; the first representing the internal blessing, the second the future blessing, the third the past blessing, the fourth the infernal blessing, the fifth the blessing on the left hand, the sixth the blessing on the right hand, and the seventh the supernal blessing.

CHAPTER I

The First Image

The Blessing Within Us

Who can recount only those blessings which every one hath in his own person? How great are, first, the gifts and endowments of the body; such as beauty, strength, health, and the lively play of the senses! To these there comes, in the case of the male, a greater nobility of sex, that fits him for the doing of many things both in public and in private life, and for many splendid achievements, to which woman is a stranger. And if, by the grace of God, you enjoy these excellent gifts for ten, twenty, or thirty years, and in all this time endure suffering for a few days now and then, what great matter is that? There is a proverb among knaves, *Es ist umb ein bose stund zuthun*, and, *Ein gutt stund ist eyner posen werdt*.[281] What shall be said of us, who have seen so many good hours, yet are not willing to endure evil for a single hour! We see, therefore, how many blessings God showers upon us, and

[281] PE: As much as, "We are in for a bad hour," and, "A good hour is worth a bad hour."

rerum, si non omnibus certe multis, et his potissimum, qui infirmi sunt ad ferenda mala. Nam (ut prius dixi) quibus minus dat rerum aut corporis, plus dat animi, ut sint omnia aequalia et ipse iustus iudex omnium. Neque enim adeo consolantur multae divitiae quam iucundus animus. Post haec quibusdam prolem, summam (ut dicitur) voluptatem, potestatem, principatum, honorem, famam, gloriam, favorem &c. quibus si detur longo tempore frui, immo etiam parvo, facile suadebunt, quid faciendum sit in parvulo malo.

Animi vero bona his omnibus praestantiora, ingenium, sciemtia, iudicium, facundia, prudentia, atque in his sicut in caeteris quoque temperat suae administrationis aequalitatem, ut quibus plus contulit, non ideo aliis eos praetulit, quibus horum vice animi maiorem vel pacem vel hilaritatem contulit. In his autem omnibus cum gratitudine attendenda est largissima dei manus atque nostra infirmitas consolanda, ut in multitudine et magnitudine bonorum non miremur, si misceatur aliquid acerbitatis, quandoquidem et voluptuariis hominibus neque assatura sine salsamento neque ullus ferme cibus gratus est, qui non acerbiore quopiam sapore sit vel natus vel conditus: adeo perpetua et sola dulcedo intoleranda res est, ut et ille recte dixerit 'Omnis voluptas assiduitate sui fastidium parit', et alius 'Labor est demum ipsa voluptas', scilicet quod haec vita impotentior sit quam ut sine malorum temperatura solis bonis frui possit prae nimia abundantia bonorum. Unde et proverbium illud natum, Oportere ossa esse robusta, quae ferant dies bonos, quod ego proverbium saepius consyderans admiratus sum, quam miram et veram sententiam habeat, ut vota hominum contra

welche wir viel guter Stunden einnehmen und nicht eine einige böse erleiden wollen? Darum sehen wir, mit was großen Gütern GOttes wir überschüttet werden und mit wie wenigen Uebeln wir kaum berühret, auf's wenigste der meiste Haufe von uns, werden.

54. An diesen Gütern läßt sich der allergütigste GOtt nicht begnügen, sondern legt uns zu Reichthum und überflüssige Genugsamkeit aller Dinge und Güter, so nicht allen, auf's wenigste unser vielen, und den Leuten am meisten, die zu schwach sein, Uebel, Beschwerung und Widerwärtigkeit zu ertragen. Denn, wie ich hiervor gesagt habe, wem GOtt zu wenig Gutes oder Leibes gibt, dem gibt er desto mehr Muths; also, daß alle Dinge gleich werden, und daß er ein gerechter Richter aller Menschen sei. Denn viel Reichthum tröstet nicht so sehr, als ein freudiges, trosthaftiges und fröhliches Herz und Muth. Auch gibt GOtt etlichen Kinder, die allergrößte Lust, wie man pflegt zu sagen, Gewalt, Herrschung, Fürstenthum, Ehre, Leumdung, gut Gerücht, Gnade und Gunst. Und wenn sie sich derselben Güter lange Zeit mögen gebrauchen, so werden sie leichtlich rathen, was man in einem kleinen Uebel oder in einer geringen Beschwerung thun soll. Aber die Güter des Gemüths sein besser, denn die andern Güter alle; also nämlich, der Verstand, Kunst, Erkenntniß, Unterscheid, Redenhaftigkeit, Klugheit. In welchen Gütern GOtt die Gleichmäßigkeit seiner gnädigen, reichen Mittheilung und Milde also mäßiget, daß, welchen Menschen er mehr Güter verliehen hat, sie nicht darum den andern entzogen hat. Denn er anstatt berührter Güter einem größere, etwann Friede und Ruhe, oder Fröhlichkeit des Gemüths gegeben hat.

how few evils barely touch us. This is true at least of the most of us.

But not content with these blessings, our gracious God adds to them riches and an abundance of all things; if not in the case of all, certainly in the case of many, and of those especially who are too frail to bear the evil. For as I said before, when He grants fewer bodily gifts and possessions, He gives greater mental gifts; so that all things may be equal, and He the just Judge of all. For a cheerful mind is a greater comfort than much riches. Moreover, to some He grants offspring,[282] and, as men say, the highest pleasure, influence, rank, honor, fame, glory, favor, and the like. And if these be enjoyed for a long or even for a short season, they will soon teach men how they ought to conduct themselves under some small evil.

But more excellent than all these are the blessings of the mind; such as reason, knowledge, judgment, eloquence, prudence. And, here again, God tempers the justice of His dealing, so that when He bestows more of these gifts on some men. He does not therefore prefer them to others, since on these again He confers greater peace and cheerfulness of mind. In all these things we should gratefully mark the bountiful hand of God, and take comfort in our infirmity. For we should feel no surprise if among so many and great blessings there be some intermingling of bitterness; since even for epicures no meat is savory without salt, nor scarce any dish palatable that has not a certain bitter savor, either native or produced by seasoning. So intolerable is a continual and unrelieved sweetness, that it has been truly said, "Every pleasure too long continued begets disgust"; and again, "Pleasure itself turns at length to loathing." That is to say, this life is

[282] See the introduction.

vota pugnent, qui non nisi bonos dies quaerant, quos tamen adeptos minus ferre queant quam malos.

Quid enim in his deus nobis commendat nisi quod in ipsis etiam inimicis crucis mirabilis sit Crux, ut non secus illius reliquiis oporteat omnia temperare et sanctificare, ne pereant, quam carnes sale condire, ne verminent? ut quid ergo hanc temperaturam a deo missam non libentissime acceptamus, quam, nisi ille mitteret, impotens nostra voluptatum et bonorum vita sponte accerseret? Ita fit, ut videamus, quam vere de deo dixerit Sapiens: Qui attingit a fine usque ad finem fortiter et disponit omnia suaviter [Sap. 8:1]. Si enim haec bona inspiciamus, apparebit verum esse illud quoque Mosi Deutr. xxxij. Portavit eum in humeris suis, circumduxit eum et custodivit quasi pupillam oculi [Deut. 32:10]. Quibus possumus obstruere os eorum, qui huius vitae plura mala quam bona inesse ingrati garriunt, cum bona et suavitatis infinita commoda non desint, sed desint, qui intelligant cum illo qui dixit : Misericordia domini plena est terra [Ps. 33:5], et iterum: Et laudis eius plena est terra [Hab. 3:3], et ps. ciij. Impleta est terra possessione tua [Ps. 104:24]: delectasti me, domine, in factura tua [Ps. 92:4]. Hinc quottidie canimus in missa 'Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua' [Isa. 6:3]. Cur hoc? quia multa bona, unde laudetur, verum ab iis dumtaxat, qui vident hanc plenitudinem: sicut enim de malis spectro primo diximus, tantum est malorum cuique, quanta eorum opinio et cognitio, Ita et bona, licet undique nos petant et obruant, tamen tanta sunt, quanta aestimantur. Nam cuncta quae foecit deus sunt valde bona [Gen. 1:31], non tamen talia ab omnibus agnoscuntur. Quales illi erant ps.

55. Aber in diesem allen soll mit Dankbarkeit betrachtet werden die allermildeste Hand GOttes, und unsere Schwachheit getrost werden, daß wir uns nicht verwundern sollen, daß in der Mannigfaltigkeit und Größe der guten Dinge oder Güter zuweilen eine Bitterkeit und Widerwärtigkeit sich mit einmischet. Denn den lustliebenden Menschen ist weder das Gebratene ohne die Salsen, noch irgend eine Speise, die nicht etwan mit einem bittern Schmack gewachsen oder gemacht wäre, angenehm: so gar kann man die stete und einige Süßigkeit allein in keinem Wege erleiden. Also, daß der Lehrer je recht gesagt hat, der geschrieben hat: Eine jegliche Wohllust gebieret durch ihre überflüssige Stetigkeit einen Verdruß. Und der also gesagt hat: Die Wohllust ist endlich eine Arbeit oder Unlust. Denn dies vergängliche Leben ist so unleidlich und ekel, daß es sich der guten und glücklichen Zustände ohne Vermischung der bösen oder widerwärtigen Dinge nicht gebrauchen mag, von wegen der überflüssigen Genugsamkeit der guten Dinge.

56. Daher auch dies Sprüchwort kommen ist: Es müssen starke Beine sein, die gute Tage ertragen mögen. An welches Sprüchwort ich oft gedacht habe und mich wundert, daß es eine so wundersame und wahrhaftige Meinung habe, also, daß der Menschen Begierden und Wunsch wider ihr selbst Begierde und Wunsch sein, und daß die Leute allein nach guten Tagen trachten; und wenn sie dieselben bekommen haben, so mögen sie die weniger denn die bösen Tage ertragen. Denn was zeiget uns in dem allen GOtt anders an, denn daß auch in den Feinden des Kreuzes das Kreuz wundersam sei, also, daß man mit dem hochwürdigen Heiligthum des

incapable of enjoying only good things without a tempering of evil, because of the too great abundance of good things, has arisen also this proverb, "It needs sturdy bones to bear good days"; which proverb I have often pondered and much admired for its excellent true sense, namely, that the wishes of men are contrary to one another; they seek none but good days, and, when these arrive, are less able to bear them than evil days.

What, then, would God have us here lay to heart but this, that the cross is held in honor even among the enemies of the cross! For all things must needs be tempered and sanctified with the relics of the cross, lest they decay; even as the meat must be seasoned with salt, that it may not breed worms. And why will we not gladly accept this tempering which God sends, and which, if He did not send it, our own life, weakened with pleasures and blessings, would of itself demand? Hence we see with what truth the Book of Wisdom says of God, "He[283] reacheth from end to end mightily, and ordereth all things sweetly." [Wisd. 8:1] And if we examine these blessings, the truth of Moses' words, in Deuteronomy xxxii, will become plain, "He bore him on His shoulders, He led him about, and kept him as the apple of His eye." [Deut. 32:10] With these words we may stop the mouths of those ungrateful praters who hold that there is in this life more of evil than of good. For there is no lack of good things and endless sweet blessings, but they are lacking who ate of the same mind with him who said, "The earth is full of the mercy of the Lord" [Ps. 33:5]; and again, "The earth is full of His praise" [Hab. 3:3]; and in Psalm ciii, "The earth is full of Thy riches" [Ps. 104:24]; "Thou,

[283] PE: In this passage "Wisdom" is the subject.

lxxvij. Et pro nihilo habuerunt terram desyderabilem [Pss. 78:1 ff.; 106:24].

Huius spectri exemplum pulcherrimum et eruditissimum nobis praebet Iob, qui ablatis bonis omnibus dixit: Si bona suscepimus de manu domini, mala quare non sustineamus [Iob 2:10]? Vere verbum aureum et potens in tentatione consolatio, Siquidem et ipse non solum patiebatur, sed ab uxore sua tentabatur ad impatientiam dicente illi: Adhuc permanes in innocentia tua? Benedic domino et morere [Iob 2:9], quasi diceret 'manifestum est, quod non sit deus, qui sic te derelinquit: cur ergo in illum confidis ac non potius negato et sic maledicto eo mortalem te agnoscis, cui post hanc vitam nihil reliquum sit?' Haec et similia et unicuique sua suggerit uxor (id est sensualitas) in tentatione, quia sensus non sapit quae dei sunt [Matth. 16:13].

Verum haec omnia sunt corporalia bona, communia omnibus: Christianus vero aliis longe melioribus pollet internis bonis, id est fide Christi, de qua dictum est ps. xliiij. Omnis gloria eius filiae regis ab intus in fimbriis aureis circumdata varietate [Ps. 45:14 f.]. Sicut enim de primi spectri malo diximus, Nullum esse tantum in nomine malum posse, quod pessimum sit eorum, quae in ipso sunt, ita optimum bonorum, quod in Christiano est, ipse non potest videre: si enim sentiret, mox in coelo esset, cum regnum coelorum (ut Christus ait) intra nos sit [Luke 17:21]. Habere enim fidem est veritatem et verbum dei habere, Habere verbum dei est deum omnium factorem habere. Quae bona, quanta sunt, si animae revelarentur, in momento e corpore solveretur prae nimia abundantia suavitatis, unde recte caetera bona quae diximus sunt velut

Kreuzes nicht anders muß alle Dinge vermischen, mäßigen und beheiligen, daß sie nicht verderben. Denn das Fleisch wird mit Salz eingemacht, daß die Würmer nicht darein kommen. Warum nehmen wir denn diese Temperatur oder Salsen, uns von GOtt geschickt, nicht auf's allerwilligste und gernste an? welche, so sie von GOtt nicht geschickt würde, unser Leben, das die Lust und guten Tage nicht ertragen kann, von ihm selbst begehret.

57. Also sehen wir, daß der weise Mann gar wahrhaftiglich von GOtt gesagt hat: „Der vom Ende zum Ende stärklich oder festiglich reicht und alle Sachen und Dinge lieblich bestellet und geschickt", Weish. 8, 1. Denn wenn wir diese Güter werden ansehen, so werden wir befinden, daß dies auch wahr ist, das Moses im fünften Buch am 32. Cap., V. 10. 11., gesagt hat: „Er hat ihn auf seinen Schultern getragen und umgeführet und wie den Augapfel behütet." Damit wir mögen denen die Mäuler verstopfen, welche undankbar sein und sagen, daß dies Leben viel mehr Uebel und böser, denn guter Dinge habe, angesehen, daß es an guten Dingen und unzähligen Nutzungen der Süßigkeit nicht gebricht, sondern allein gebricht an denen, die deß einen Verstand hätten, mit dem Propheten, der da gesagt hat, Ps. 33, 5.: „Die ganze Erde ist voller Gnade des HErrn." Item, V. 24.: „Das Erdreich ist voll seines Lobes." Und im 104. Ps., V. 24.: „Das Erdreich ist erfüllet worden durch deine Besitzung." Ps. 92, 5.: „O HErr, du hast mich erlüstet und erfreuet durch deine Creatur und Geschöpfe."

58. Derhalben singen wir täglich in der Messe: Himmel und Erden sein voll deiner Ehre und Glorien. Warum das? Denn es sein sehr viel guter

Lord, hast made me glad through Thy work," [Ps. 92:4] Hence we sing every day in the Mass;[284] "Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory." [Isa. 6:3] Why do we sing this? Because there are many blessings for which God may be praised, but it is done only by those who see the fulness of them. Even as we said concerning the evils of the first image, that a man's evils are only so great as he in his thoughts acknowledges them to be, so it is also with the blessings. Though they crowd upon us from every side, yet they are only so great as we acknowledge them to be. For all things that God made are very good, [Gen. 1:31] but they are not acknowledged as very good by all. Such were they of whom it is said in Psalm lxxvii,[285] "They despised the pleasant land." [Pss. 78:1; 106:24]

The most beautiful and instructive example of this image is furnished by Job, who when he had lost all said. "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" [Job 2:10] Truly, that is a golden saying, and a mighty comfort in temptation. For Job not only suffered, but was tempted to impatience by his wife, who said to him, "Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die." [Job 2:9] As who should say, "It is plain that he is not God who is thus forsaking thee. Why, then, dost thou trust in him, and not rather, renouncing him, and thus cursing him, acknowledge thyself a mortal man, for whom naught remains after this life?" These things and the like are suggested to each one of us by his wife (i.e., his carnal mind) in time of temptation; for the carnal mind[286] savoreth not the things that be of God. [Matt. 16:13]

But these are all bodily blessings, and common to all men. A Christian

[284] PE: In the *Sanctus*.

[285] PE: Luther quotes a verse from Ps. 106, which sums up the contents of Ps. 78.

[286] PE: Luther uses *sensualitas* the first time, and *sensus* the second.

monitoria eorum bonorum quae intus habemus, quae nobis per illa vult commendata, quod haec vita non sustineat ea revelari, sed misericorditer a deo absconduntur, donec creverint in perfectum suum modum, Non secus ac pii parentes filiis suis quandoque ludicra et minuta donaria donant, quibus animos filiorum alliciant ad spem maiorum.

Ostendunt tamen se nonnunquam et prodeunt foris, dum exhilarata conscientia gaudet in fiducia dei, libenter de eo loquitur, cum suavitate verbum eius audit, prompta et iucunda fit ad serviendum ei, ad bona opera, ad ferenda mala &c. Quae omnia sunt indicia latentis ibi infiniti et incomparabilis boni, quod has guttulas et stillas parvas foras mittit tenui scaturigine, quamvis nonnunquam fiat, ut contemplatricibus animabus latius reveletur, ita ut absorptae nesciant ubi fuerint. Qualia S. Augustinus et mater sua de se confitentur et multi alii.

Dinge, darum GOtt gelobt und gepreiset wird, aber allein von den Menschen, die diese Vollkommenheit sehen. Denn eben wie ich im ersten Bildniß der bösen Dinge gesagt habe, daß ein jeglicher Mensch so viel Uebel oder böse Dinge habe, so viel er Wähnung, Meinung oder Erkenntniß davon hat. Also auch, wiewohl der guten Dinge so viel sein, daß sie uns allenthalben umringen und überschütten: so sein sie doch nicht größer, denn sie von uns gehalten, geachtet und geschätzt werden. Denn alle die Dinge, so GOtt gemacht hat, sein sehr gut; wiewohl sie also gethan und geschickt, nicht von allen Menschen erkennet werden; wie denn die Leute gewesen sein, davon der 106. Psalm, V. 24., sagt: „Und sie haben das begierwürdige oder sehenswürdige Gelobte Land nichts geachtet."

59. In dem trägt uns vor ein allerschönstes, künstlichstes und artigstes Vorbild der heilige Hiob: der, als er alle seine Güter verloren hatte, sagte, Cap. 2, 10.: „Haben wir gute Dinge aus den Händen des HErrn empfangen und genommen, warum wollten wir nicht auch Uebel erleiden?" Wahrlich, es ist ein gülden Wort und eine kräftige Vertröstung in der Anfechtung, denn er litt nicht allein, sondern er ward auch von seiner Hausfrau zu der Ungeduld angefochten, die zu ihm sprach, V. 9.: „Bleibst du noch in deiner Unschuld? benedeie den HErrn und stirb." Als wollte sie sagen: Das ist offenbar, daß der nicht GOtt ist, der dich verläßt, warum vertrauest du denn in ihm, und nicht vielmehr ihn verleugnest und vermaledeiest und dich für eine sterbliche Creatur erkennest, und der nach diesem Leben nichts erfolge? Das und dergleichen gibt einem jeglichen sein Weib ein (das ist die Sinnlichkeit,) in der Anfechtung, denn der Sinn schmecket nicht die Dinge, die GOttes sein.

60. Aber alle diese Güter sein

has other and far better blessings within, namely, faith in Christ; of which it is said in Psalm xliv, "The king's daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold." [Ps. 45:14 f.] For, as we said concerning the evil of the first image, that no evil in a man can be so great as to be the worst of the evils within him; so too the greatest of the blessings which are in the Christian, he himself is unable to see. Could he perceive it, he would forthwith be in heaven; since the kingdom of heaven, as Christ says, is within us. [Luke 17:21] For to have faith is to have the Word and truth of God; and to have the Word of God is to have God Himself, the Maker of all. If these blessings, in all their fulness, were discovered to the soul, straightway it would be released from the body, for the exceeding abundance of sweet pleasure. Wherefore, of a truth, all the other blessings which we have mentioned are but as the monitors of those blessings which we have within, and which God would by than commend unto us. For this life of ours could not endure to have than revealed, but God mercifully keeps them hidden, until they have reached their full measure. Even so loving parents give their children foolish little toys, in order thereby to lead them on to look for better things.

Nevertheless, these blessings show themselves at times, and break out of doors, when the happy conscience rejoices in its trust to Godward, is fain to speak of Him, hears His Word with pleasure, and is quick to serve Him, to do good and suffer evil. All these are the evidence of that infinite and incomparable blessing hidden within, which sends forth such little drops and tiny rills. Still, it is sometimes more fully revealed to contemplative souls, who then are rapt away thereby, and know not where they are; as is

leibliche Güter und so gemein, daß sie allen Menschen mögen widerfahren. Aber ein christlicher Mensch hat viel bessere und vortrefflichere Güter inwendig und innerlich in ihm; das ist, er hat in ihm den Glauben Christi, unsers lieben HErrn und Seligmachers, von welchem gesagt ist im 45. Ps., V. 14. 15.: „Die ganze Ehre und Glorie der Tochter des Königs ist inwendig, in dem güldenen Saum oder Gebräm, umgeben mit Mannigfaltigkeit." Denn eben wie ich im Uebel des ersten Bildnisses gesagt habe, daß kein Uebel in dem Menschen so groß sein mag, daß das allerböseste sei der Uebel, die inwendig oder innerlich in ihm sein. Also, das allerbeste und vortrefflichste Gut, so in einem christlichen Menschen ist, mag er nicht sehen. Denn wenn ein christlicher Mensch dasselbige Gut empfindete, so wäre er bereit im Himmel, denn das Reich im Himmel, wie Christus sagt, Luc. 17, 21., ist in uns selbst. Denn, haben den Glauben, ist haben die Wahrheit und das Wort GOttes; haben das Wort GOttes, ist haben den Schöpfer aller Dinge.

61. Und wenn der Seele offenbar wird, was das für große Güter wären, so würde sie im Augenblick von dem Leibe abgesondert vor überflüssiger Menge der Süßigkeit. Derhalben ich recht gesagt habe, daß die andern Güter oder guten Dinge seien gleichwie Erinnerung und Ermahnung der Güter, die wir inwendig in uns haben, die er uns durch dieselben anzeigt, befiehlt und angibt; darum, daß dies zeitliche Leben nicht gestattet, daß sie uns sollten offenbart und entdeckt werden. Dieselben großen Güter werden

confessed by St. Augustine and his mother,[287] and by many others.

[287] Augustine, *Confessions*, 9, caput 10. "We then were conversing alone very pleasantly; and, 'forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,' [Phil. 3:13] we were seeking between ourselves in the presence of the Truth, which Thou art, of what nature the eternal life of the saints would be, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man. [1 Cor. 2:9; Isa. 64:4] But yet we opened wide the mouth of our heart, after those supernal streams of Thy fountain, 'the fountain of life,' which is 'with Thee;' [Ps. 36:9] that being sprinkled with it according to our capacity, we might in some measure weigh so high a mystery." (NPNF, First Series, 1, 137)

CAPUT SECUNDUM
de spectro secundo,

quod est bonum futurum seu ante se.

His qui Christiani non sunt de futuris bonis parum potest solatii dari in suis malis, quod incerta sunt onmia, quanquam in hoc sit magni tumultus autor ille affectus, qui spes vocatur, celebris, quo invicem humana consolatione iubemur sperare meliora, quo grandia molimur in incertum frequentissime, immo semper falsi, sicut Christus de eo in Euangelio Lu. xij. docet, qui animae suae dixit: Destruam horrea mea

aber von GOtt gnädiglich und barmherziglich verhalten und verborgen, bis sie in ihr vollkommen Maß erwachsen. Eben wie die gütigen und getreuen Eltern zuweilen ihren Kindern schimpfliche und geringe Gaben schenken, die Gemüther ihrer Kinder dadurch zu der Hoffnung mehrerer Gaben zu erregen, reizen und bewegen.

62. Doch erzeigen sich diese innerlichen Güter zuweilen und treten hervor, wenn das Gewissen mit erfreutem Vertrauen und Zuversicht zu GOtt gerne von GOtt redet, mit Süßigkeit und gutem Willen sein Wort hört und willig und lustig wird, GOtt zu dienen zu guten Werken, und Uebel und Widerwärtigkeit zu leiden. Welches alles Anzeigungen sein, daß daselbst das unendliche, unzählige, unmerkliche und unermessene Gut verborgen ist, das diese Tropfen von sich gibt mit einem gar kleinen und geringen Quell; wiewohl es wohl zuweilen kommt, daß solches innerliche Gut den beschaulichen Seelen weitläuftig eröffnet wird, daß sie also versinken, daß sie nicht wissen, wo sie gewesen sein, wie denn St. Augustinus und seine Mutter von ihnen selbst bekennen, und viel andere mehr.

Der andere Unterscheid,

von dem zukünftigen Gut.

63. Denen Menschen, die nicht christliche Leute sein, mag von den zukünftigen Gütern wenig Trostes gegeben werden in ihren Uebeln, Beschwerung und Anfechtung, darum, daß es alles ungewiß ist. Wiewohl die Hoffnung in dem eine Ursache ist eines großen Aufruhrs, dadurch wir bewegt werden, vermittelst menschlicher Vertröstung Hoffnung zu haben, es werde besser werden. Dadurch wir auch bewegt

CHAPTER II

The Second Image

The Future Blessing or the Blessing Before Us

Those who are not Christians will find small comfort, amid their evils, in the contemplation of future blessings; since for them all these things are uncertain. Although much ado is made here by that famous emotion called hope, by which we call on each other, in words of human comfort, to look for better times, and continually plan greater things for the uncertain future, yet are always deceived. Even as Christ

et faciam ampliora, et dicam animae meae 'requiesce, ede, bibe, epulare, anima mea, habes multa bona in plurimos annos', dixit autem illi deus: Stulte, hac nocte repetent animam tuam a te, et quae parasti, cuius erunt? Sic est, qui thezaurisat et non est in deum dives [Luke 12:18, 21 ff.].

Quanquam nec sic deus reliquerit filios hominum, quin hoc affectu mali amovendi et boni accessuri eos soletur, licet incerti sint de futuris, certi tamen sperant, quo interim sustinentur, ne desperationis malo adiecto praesens malum non ferant et peiora faciant. Quare et ipse affectus spei eiusmodi donum dei est, non quod eo velit eos niti, sed moneri ad spem solidam, quae est in ipsum solum. Ideo enim longanimis est, ut adducat eos ad poenitentiam [Ro. 2:4], ut Ro. ij. dicit, nec sinit statim et omnes falli hac fallaci spe, si quo modo redeant ad cor et vere sperent.

Christianis vero praeter haec bona dupla sunt maxima bona certo futura, sed per mortem et passiones, Siquidem et ipsi gaudent communi illa spe incerta finiendi mali praesentis et augendi boni contrarii, quanquam id non adeo curent quam quod bonum suum proprium augetur, quod est veritas in Christo, in quo promovent de die in diem, propter quod et vivunt et sperant. Sed ultra haec dixi, duo maxima futura habent in morte: Primum, quod morte finitur universa huius vitae malorum tragoedia, sicut scriptum est: Preciosa in conspectu domini mors sanctorum eius [Ps. 116:15], et iterum: In pace in idipsum dormiam et requiescam [Ps. 4:8], et: Iustus, si morte praeoccupatus fuerit, in refrigerio erit [Sap. 4:7], ubi contra impiis Mors initium est malorum, sicut dicit: Mors peccatorum pessima

werden gemeiniglich, ja, allezeit betrogen und verführt, nach großen Sachen, Dingen und Händeln zu trachten. Wie denn unser HErr und Seligmacher selbst im Evangelium St. Lucä am 12. Capitel, V. 18. 21. ff., lehrt von dem, der zu seiner Seele sagte: „Ich will mein Städel oder Scheuren einreißen und zerbrechen und dieselben größer machen, und will sagen zu meiner Seele: Ruhe, iß, trink, lebe wohl, meine Seele, du hast sehr viel Güter auf viel Jahr. Aber GOtt sagte zu ihm: O du Narr, sie werden diese Nacht deine Seele wiederum von dir fordern, und weß wird doch das sein, das du zusammengetrieben und gelesen hast? Also ist der, der ihm selbst einen Schatz sammlet und in GOtt nicht reich ist."

64. Wiewohl GOtt die Kinder der Menschen auch nicht also verlassen hat, daß er nicht mit der Meinung, das Böse oder Uebel abzuwenden und das Gute zu erlangen und bekommen, sie tröste. Wiewohl sie von den zukünftigen Dingen ungewiß und unsicher sein, so sein sie doch gewisser Hoffnung, damit sie sich indeß unterhalten; auf daß, so ihnen Widerwärtigkeit zustehet, sie nicht verzweifeln, die Widerwärtigkeit nicht erleiden, und noch ärgere und bösere Dinge thun. Derhalben auch dieselbe Hoffnung eine Gabe GOttes ist, nicht daß seine Meinung sei, daß wir uns darauf sollen verlassen, sondern daß wir dadurch sollen gereizt, beweget und gezogen werden zu der rechten beständigen Hoffnung, die in GOtt allein steht. Darum ist GOtt geduldig, die Leute zu der Buße zu bringen, wie St. Paulus zu den Römern am 2. Cap., V. 4., sagt: GOtt läßt auch nicht jedermann durch diese betrügliche Hoffnung betrogen werden, ob sie zu ihrer Vernunft Wiederkommen, sich bekehren, zu GOtt wenden

teaches concerning the man in the Gospel, Luke xii, who said to his soul, "I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; and then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." [Luke 12:18, 21 ff.]

Nevertheless, God has not so utterly forsaken the sons of men that He will not grant them some measure of comfort in this hope of the passing of evil and the coming of good things. Though they are uncertain of the future, yet they hope with certain hope, and hereby they are meanwhile buoyed up, lest falling into the further evil of despair, they should break down under their present evil, and do some worse thing.[288] Hence, even this sort of hope is the gift of God; not that He would have them lean on it, but that He would turn their attention to that firm hope, which is in Him alone. For He is so long-suffering that He leadeth them to repentance [Ro. 2:4], as it is said in Romans ii, and suffers none to be straightway deceived by this deceitful hope, if haply they may "return to the heart," [289] and come to the true hope.

But Christians have, beside this twofold blessing, [290] the very greatest future blessings certainly awaiting them; yet only through death and suffering. Although they, too, rejoice in that common and uncertain hope that the evil of the present will come to an end, and that its opposite, the blessing, will increase; still, that is not their chief concern, but rather this, that their own

[288] PE: Luther is probably thinking of the sin of suicide.
[289] PE: From the Vulgate (Douay Version).
[290] PE: Namely, the hope of the passing evil and the coming of good things. See above.

[Ps. 34:21], et: Virum iniustum mala capient in interitu [Ps. 140:11]. Sic Lazarus consolabitur, qui recepit hic sua mala, ubi epulo cruciabitur, quia recepit hic sua bona [Luc. 16:25]. Sic fit, ut Christianus, sive moriatur sive vivat, semper melius habeat: adeo beata res est esse Christianum et in Christum credere. Unde Paulus dicit: Mihi vivere Christus est et mori lucrum [Phil. 1:21], et Ro. xiiij. Qui vivit, domino vivit, qui moritur, domino moritur: sive ergo vivimus sive morimur, domini sumus [Rom. 14:8 f.]. Hanc securitatem Christus nobis obtinuit, quod mortuus est et resurrexit, ut dominus esset vivorum et mortuorum, potens nos facere securos tam in vita quam in morte, sicut ps. xxij. dicit: Si ambulem in medio umbrae mortis, non timebo mala, quoniam tu mecum es. [Ps. 23:4]. Quod si hoc lucrum mortis parum movet, signum est, fidem Christi infirmam in nobis esse, quae precium et lucrum bonae mortis non satis aestimat aut bonam esse mortem nondum credit, impediente scilicet nimium adhuc vivace vetere homine et sapientia carnis. Conandum itaque est, ut ad mortis hoc beneficium cognoscendum et amandum promoveamur. Magna res est mortem, quae aliis maximum malorum est, maximum lucrum nobis fieri, Et nisi hoc Christus nobis praestitisset, quid dignum tanto impendio suiipsius foecisset? divinum opus est plane quod foecit: ideo non ulli mirum quod mortis malum foecerit optimum [Gen. 1:31].

Proinde mors iam mortua est fidelibus nihilque habet terribile praeter speciem et larvam, Non secus ac serpens occisus habet quidem speciem priorem terribilem, revera tamen sola species ibi est et mortuum malum ac iam innoxium. Immo sicut Num. xxi. Serpentem aeneum iussit erigi, cuius

und recht und wahrhaftiglich hoffen wollten.

65. Aber die Christen haben über berührte Güter zwiefach größere, die allergrößten Güter, die ihnen gewiß und eigentlich künftig zustehen werden. Aber nicht anders, denn durch den Tod und Leiden. Denn sie haben auch eine Freude in der gemeinen Hoffnung, es werde das gegenwärtige Uebel endlich ein Ende nehmen, und das Gut, so demselben Uebel entgegen, gemehret werden, wiewohl ihnen so gar viel daran nicht liegt und es nicht hoch achten, denn allein daß ihr eigen Gut zunimmt. Aber ihr eigen Gut ist die Wahrheit in dem HErrn Christo, in welchem sie von Tage zu Tage zunehmen. Derhalben sie auch leben und hoffen. Aber über das alles haben die Christen zwei allergrößte zukünftige Dinge im Tode. Das erste, daß durch den Tod beschlossen und verzogen wird die ganze Versammlung aller Uebel, Beschwerung und Widerwärtigkeit dieses Lebens; wie geschrieben steht Ps. 116, 15.: „O wie köstlich und theuer ist in dem Angesicht des HErrn der Tod seiner Heiligen.“ Und Ps. 4, 9.: „Ich werde in Friede im HErrn schlafen und ruhen.“ Und Weish. 4, 7.: „Wenn der Gerechte mit dem Tode übereilet wird, so wird er in der Erquickung und Ergötzlichkeit sein.“

66. Dagegen ist der Tod den ungottesfürchtigen, unchristlichen und ungläubigen Menschen ein Anfang der Uebel, wie er sagt Ps. 34,22.: „Der Tod der Sünder ist der allerböseste.“ Und Ps. 140, 12.: „Den ungerechten Mann werden die Uebel im Verderben begreifen.“ Also wird der Lazarus getröstet werden, der allhier sein Uebel empfangen hat, da der Fraß und Schlemmer wird gepeiniget werden, darum, daß er seine guten Dinge und Tage hier

particular blessing should increase, which is the truth as it is in Christ, in which they grow from day to day, and for which they both live and hope. But beside this they have, as I have said, the two greatest future blessings in their death. The first, in that through death the whole tragedy of this world's ills is brought to a close; as it is written, “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints”; [Ps. 116:15] and again, “I will lay me down in peace and sleep”; [Ps. 4:8] and “Though the righteous be prevented with death, yet shall he be at rest.” [Wisd. 4:7] But to the ungodly death is the beginning of evils; as it is said, “The death of the wicked is very evil,” [Ps. 34:21] and, “Evil shall catch the unjust man unto destruction.”[291] [Ps. 140:11] Even so Lazarus, who received his evil things in his lifetime, is comforted, while the rich glutton is tormented, because he received his good things here. [Luke 16:25] So that it is always well with the Christian, whether he die or live; so blessed a thing is it to be a Christian and to believe in Christ. Wherefore Paul says, “To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain,” [Phil. 1:21] and, in Romans xiv, “Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.” [Rom. 14:8 f.] This security Christ hath won for us by His death and rising again, that He might be Lord of both the living and dead, able to keep us safe in life and in death; as Psalm xxii. saith, “Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me.” [Ps. 23:4] If this gain of death move us but little, it is proof that our faith in Christ is feeble, and does not prize highly enough the reward and gain of a blessed death, or does not yet believe

[291] PE: The last two passages read thus in the Vulgate.

aspectu vivi serpentes peribant [Num. 21:8 f.], ita et mors nostra fidelissimo intuitu mortis Christi perit ac iam non apparet nisi figura quaedam mortis. Adeo nobis infirmis praeludit misericordia dei his pulchris figuris, ut, mortem quoniam non oportet aufferri, tamen usque ad speciem solam virtutem eius evacuet [Matth. 9:24], ob quam rem et somnus potius vocatur in scripturis quam mors [I Thess. 4:13 ff.].

Alterum bonum mortis, quod non solum finit mala poenarum huius vitae, sed, quod praestantius, finem ponit vitiis et peccatis, quod animabus fidelibus longe plus mortem reddit optabilem, ut diximus supra, quam iam dictum bonum, Siquidem mala animae, quae sunt peccata, incomparabiliter peiora malis corporis sunt. Quae sola, si saperemus, nobis mortem amabilissimam facerent. Si autem non faciunt, signum est, quod mala animae nostrae non satis sentimus nec odimus. Cum ergo haec vita sit periculosissima, undique lubrico peccato nobis insidiante, deinde nec sine peccato vivere possimus, optima mors ab his periculis nos solvit et peccatum penitus abscindit a nobis, unde in laudem iusti Sap. iiij. perorat: Placens deo, factus dilectus et vivens inter peccatores translatus est. Raptus est, ne malitia mutaret intellectum eius, aut ne fictio deciperet animam illius. Fascinatio enim nugacitatis obscurat bona et inconstantia concupiscentiae transvertit sensum sine malitia (o quam haec vera sunt et assidua!). Consummatus in brevi explevit tempora multa: placita enim erat deo anima illius, propter hoc properavit educere illum de medio iniquitatis [Sap. 4:10-14].

Ita (misericordia dei) mors, quae homini peccati poena fuit, Christiano peccati finis et vitae ac iusticiae inicium facta est: quocirca qui vitam et iustitiam amat, ministram et officinam

gehabt hat, Luc. 16, 25. Also kommt es, daß es einem Christen, er sterbe oder genese und lebe, allezeit wohl und seliglich geht. Ein so selig Ding ist es, ein Christenmensch sein und an den HErrn Christum glauben, wie St. Paulus sagt, Phil. 1, 21.: „Der Christus ist mir das Leben, und das Sterben der Gewinn“; und zu den Römern am 14. Cap., V. 7. 8.: „Wer da lebet, der lebet dem HErrn, wer da stirbt, der stirbt dem HErrn. Darum wir leben oder sterben, so sein wir des HErrn.“

67. Diese Sicherheit hat Christus, unser HErr, uns erlangt, daß er gestorben und wieder auferstanden ist, auf daß er wäre ein HErr der Lebendigen und Todten, mächtig uns zu sichern, und frei, ledig und sicher zu machen im Leben und Tode, wie der 23. Psalm, V. 4., sagt: „Wenn ich mitten im Schatten des Todes wandere, so werde ich mich vor den Uebeln nicht fürchten, denn du bist bei mir.“ Und so dieser Gewinn des Todes in uns wenig schaffet, bewegt und erträgt, so ist es ein Zeichen, daß der Glaube Christi, unsers HErrn, in uns schwach ist, welcher schwacher Glaube nicht genugsam bedenket die Würderung und den Gewinn des guten Todes, oder noch nicht glaubt, daß der Tod gut sei, durch überflüssige Verhinderung des alten Menschen und der Weisheit des Fleisches, darum sollen wir uns befleißigen, daß wir mögen dahin kommen, daß wir die Wohlthat, Güte und Förderung des Todes erkennen und lieben.

68. Das ist ein groß Ding, daß der Tod, den die andern Menschen für das allergrößte Uebel halten, uns Christen der allergrößte Gewinn wird. Und wenn uns Christus, unser HErr, diese Gnade und Wohlthat nicht erzeigt hätte; so hätte er nichts würdig seiner selbst so großen, milden und gütigen Darlegung gethan. Denn das Werk, das er gethan hat, ist ganz göttlich. Darum

that death is a blessing; because the old man is still too much alive in us, and the wisdom of the flesh too strong. We should, therefore, endeavor to attain to the knowledge and the love of this blessing of death. It is a great thing that death, which is to others the greatest of evils, is made to us the greatest gain. And unless Christ had obtained this for us, what bad He done that was worthy of the great price He paid, namely, His own self? It is indeed a divine work that He wrought, and none need wonder, therefore, that He made the evil of death to be something that is very good. [Gen. 1:31]

Death, then, to believers is already dead, and hath nothing terrible behind its grinning mask. Like unto a slain serpent, it hath indeed its former terrifying appearance, but it is only the appearance; in truth it is a dead evil, and harmless enough. Nay, as God commanded Moses to lift up a serpent of brass, at sight of which the living serpents perished, [Num. 21:8 f.] even so our death dies in the believing contemplation of the death of Christ, and now hath but the outward appearance of death. With such fine similitudes the mercy of God prefigures to us, in our infirmity, this truth, that though death would not be taken away, He yet has reduced its power to a mere shadow. [Matt. 9:24] For this reason it is called in the Scriptures a “sleep” rather than death. [1 Thess. 4:13 ff.]

The other blessing of death is this, that it not only concludes the pains and evils of this life, but (which is more excellent) makes an end of sins and vices. And this renders death far more desirable to believing souls, as I have said above, than the former blessing; since the evils of the soul, which are its sins, are beyond comparison worse evils than those of the body. This alone, did we but know it, should make death most desirable. But if it

earum mortem non exhorreat sed amet necesse est, Alioquin nec ad vitam nec ad iustitiam unquam perveniet. Qui vero non potest, oret deum ut possit. Nam ideo docemur dicere 'fiat voluntas tua' [Matt. 6:10], quia nos eam ex nobis facere nequimus, qui potius mortem timentes mortem et peccatum amamus quam vitam et iustitiam diligamus. Nam quod mortem deus in peccati occasum ordinarit, hinc quoque colligi licet, quod Adae statim post peccatum imposuit mortem velut emendam peccati [Gen. 2:17], atque id antequam eiiceret de Paradyso, ut nobis ostenderet mortem nihil mali sed omne bonum nobis operari, quando in Paradyso tanquam poenitentia et satisfactio imposita est. Verum est enim, quod mors invidia diaboli intravit in orbem terrarum [Sap. 2:24], sed hoc eximiae et divinae bonitatis fuit, mortem sic ingressam non sinere tantum nocere sed apprehensam in peccati poenam et mortem mox ab inicio sui ordinare.

Hoc enim significavit, quod cum mortem Adae in praecepto praedixisset [Gen. 2:17], non tamen postea tacuit, sed denuo mortem imposuit ac rigorem praecepti temperavit, immo ne meminit quidem mortis ulla syllaba, sed dixit solum 'pulvis es, et in pulverem reverteris' [Gen. 3:19] et 'donec revertaris in terram, de qua sumptus es', quasi iam tunc odio habens mortem, quam nec nominare dignaretur iuxta illud 'Quoniam ira in indignatione eius et vita in voluntate eius' [Ps. 30:5], Ita visus loqui, quod, nisi mors necessaria fuisset ad peccati abolitionem, ipsam nec scire nec nominare, nedum imponere voluisset. Adeo scilicet contra peccatum, quod mortem operatum est, rursus aemulatio divina non aliud quam ipsam mortem armat, ut hic videas illud poete [280] : Necis

ist es ihm kein Wunder, daß er das Uebel des Todes hat zu dem allerbesten Dinge gemacht. Derhalben der Tod den Christen nun gestorben und vergangen ist, und hat nichts Erschreckliches außerhalb der Gestalt, schlechtem Ansehen und Larven. Eben wie eine erschlagene Schlange, die ihre vorige erschreckliche Gestalt wohl noch hat, aber in der Wahrheit allein die Gestalt und das Ansehen allda ist, und ein todtes und unschädliches Uebel. Ja, wie im 4. Buch Mosis am 21., V. 8. 9., steht, hat er besohlen eine eherne Schlange aufzurichten, durch deren Anblicken oder Ansehen die lebendigen Schlangen starben. Also auch, unser Tod durch das allervertraulichste Ansehen des Todes Christi, unsers HErrn, stirbt, und nun nicht mehr erscheint, denn allein eine Figur und Gestalt des Todes. So gar gütiglich spielet mit uns Schwachen die Barmherzigkeit GOttes, mit diesen schönen Figuren und Gestaltnissen, daß, nachdem der Tod nicht gänzlich hat müssen weggenommen werden, er auf's wenigste eine Stärke, Vermögen und Kraft bis auf diese Gestalt ledig und leer macht. Derhalben es auch in der heiligen Schrift mehr ein Schlaf, denn ein Tod genennet wird.

69. Das andere Gut des Todes, daß er beschließt und abschneidet, nicht allein die Uebel der Pein dieses Lebens, sondern das viel trefflicher besser und mehr ist; es verändert oder macht auch ein Ende den Lastern und Sünden, welches den gläubigen Seelen den Tod viel wunschwürdiger, angenehmer und lieblicher macht, wie ich hiervor gesagt habe, denn das erste berührte Gut. Denn die Uebel der Seele, welches die Sünden sind, sein unvergleichlich ärger und böser, denn die Uebel des Leichnams, und wenn wir die Sünde allein erkenneten, so machten

does not, it is a sign that we neither feel nor hate our sin as we should. For this our life is so full of perils—sin, like a serpent, besetting us on every side—and it is impossible for us to live without sinning; but fairest death delivers us from these perils, and cuts our sin clean away from us. Therefore, the praise of the just man, in Wisdom iv, concludes on this wise: "He pleased God, and was taken away, and was beloved of Him: so that living among sinners he was translated. Yea, speedily was he taken away, lest that wickedness should alter his understanding, or deceit beguile his soul. For the bewitching of naughtiness doth obscure things that are honest; and the wandering of concupiscence doth undermine the simple mind (O how constantly true is this!). He, being made perfect in a short time, fulfilled a long time; for his soul pleased the Lord: therefore hasted He to take him away from the wicked." [Wisd. 4:10-14]

Thus, by the mercy of God, death, which was to man the punishment for his sin, is made unto the Christian the end of sin, and the beginning of life and righteousness. Wherefore, he that loves life and righteousness must not hate, but love sin, their minister and workshop; else he will never attain to either life or righteousness. But he that is not able to do this, let him pray God to enable him. For to this end are we taught to pray, "Thy will be done," [Matt. 6:10] because we cannot do it of ourselves, since through fear of death we love death and sin rather than life and righteousness. And that God appointed death for the putting to death of sin, may be gathered also from the fact that He imposed death upon Adam immediately after his sin [Gen. 2:17]; and that before He drove him out of paradise; in order to show us

[280] Ovid, *Ars amat.*, 1, 656.

artificem arte perire sua, et peccatum a suo fructu proprio perdi et morte quam genuit occidi, sicut viperam a sua prole. Hoc est pulcherrimum spectaculum, videre, quomodo peccatum non alieno sed suo proprio opere perditur, suo gladio iugulatur et velut Goliath suo gladio caput amputatur. Nam et Goliath figura fuit peccati, terribilis gygas omnibus excepto parvulo David, id est Christo, qui solus eum prostravit et, absciso capite proprio illius gladio [I Sam. 17:51], iam meliorem non esse gladium dicit quam Goliath, i. Reg. xxi [I Sam. 21:9].

Si ergo haec gaudia virtutis Christi et dona eius gratiae meditemur, quid nos torquebit malum parvulum, quando in tam magno malo futuro tam magna bona videmus?

sie uns den Tod auf's allerlieblichste: wenn sie aber uns den Tod nicht lieblich machen, so ist es ein Zeichen, daß wir die Uebel unserer Seelen noch nicht genugsam empfinden noch haffen. Weil nun dies Leben auf's allergefährlichste ist, und uns die schlüpfrigste Sünde allenthalben nachstellt, und wir ohne Sünde nicht mögen leben; derhalben ist der Tod das allerbeste Ding, das uns von diesen Uebeln, Beschwerung und Widerwärtigkeit entbindet und erlöset, und die Sünde gänzlich von uns abschneidet. Derhalben der Weise im Buch der Weisheit am 4. Capitel, V. 10. 11. 12., schreibt, zu Lob dem gerechten Menschen, „der GOtt dem HErrn gefallen hat und lieb geworden ist, und unter den Lebendigen weggenommen, auf daß die Bosheit seinen Verstand nicht verwandele oder daß die Erdichtung seine Seele nicht betrüge. Denn die Bezauberung der Eitelkeit verdunkelt die guten Dinge, und die Unbeständigkeit der Begierlichkeit verkehret den Sinn, der ohne Bosheit ist. (O wie wahr und gemein ist das alles!) Als er in kurzen verstorben war, hat er viel Zeit erfüllet, denn seine Seele war GOtt gefällig. Derhalben hat er geeilet, ihn aus dem Mittel der Ungerechtigkeit zu nehmen."

70. Also ist der Tod, der dem Menschen eine Pein der Sünden gewesen ist, durch die allergütigste und allerfreundlichste Barmherzigkeit GOttes den christlichen Leuten ein Ende der Sünden und ein Anfang des Lebens und der Gerechtigkeit worden. Derhalben, wer das Leben und die Gerechtigkeit liebt, der muß von Noth wegen die Dienerin und Werkstatt des Lebens und der Gerechtigkeit, das der Tod ist, nicht scheuen noch fürchten, sondern lieb haben: sonst wird er nimmermehr

that death should bring us no evil, but every blessing, since it was imposed in paradise, as a penance and satisfaction.[292] For it is true that, through the envy of the devil, death altered into the world; [Wisd. 2:24] but it is of the Lord's surpassing goodness that, after having thus entered in, it is not permitted to harm us very much, but is taken captive from the very beginning, and set to be the punishment and death of sin.

This He signified when, after having in His commandment foretold the death of Adam, [Gen. 2:17] He did not afterward hold His peace, but imposed death anew, and tempered the severity of His commandment, nay. He did not so much as mention death with a single syllable, but said only, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" [Gen. 3:19]; and, "Until thou return unto the ground, from whence thou wast taken"—as if He then so bitterly hated death that He would not deign to call it by its name, according to the word, "Wrath is in His indignation; and life in His good will."[293] [Ps. 30:5] Thus He seemed to say that, unless death had been necessary to the abolishing of sin, He would not have been willing to know it nor to name it, much less to impose it. And so, against sin, which wrought death, the zeal of God arms none other than this very death again; so that you may here see exemplified the poet's line,[294]

By his own art the artist perisheth.

Even so sin is destroyed by its own fruit, and is slain by the death which it brought forth;[295] as a viper is slain by its own offering. This is a brave spectacle, to see how death is destroyed, not by another's work, but by its own; is

[292] A former belief of Luther's which was left unrevised.
[293] PE: Thus the Vulgate.
[294] Ovid, *Ars amat.*, 1, 656.
[295] PE: Cf. *Treatise on Baptism.*

weder zu dem Leben, noch zu der Gerechtigkeit kommen. Wer es aber nicht vermag zu thun, der bitte GOtt darum, daß er es vermöge. Denn derhalben werden wir unterweiset zu sprechen, Matth. 6, V. 10.: „Dein Wille geschehe“, daß wir ihn von uns selbst nicht haben vermocht zu verbringen, die wir mehr den Tod fürchten, und den Tod und die Sünde damit lieben, denn mir das Leben und die Gerechtigkeit liebten.

71. Denn daß GOtt den Tod zu einem Beschluß und Abscheidung der Sünden verordnet habe, mag auch aus diesem genommen werden, daß er dem Adam zu Stund, sobald nach der Sünde, den Tod aufgelegt hat als zu einer Buße der Sünden, und ehe er ihn aus dem Paradies trieb; uns dadurch anzuzeigen, daß uns der Tod nichts Uebels, sondern alles Gutes wirket, weil der Tod im Paradies gleich als eine Buße und Genugthuung aufgelegt ist, 1 Mos. 2, 17. Denn das ist wahr, daß durch den Neid des Teufels der Tod ist in die Welt gegangen, Weish. 2, 24. Aber das ist eine sonderliche, vornehme und vortreffliche Güte, daß der Tod, der also auf das Erdreich kommen ist, nicht Statt und Gewalt allein zu schaden hat, sondern daß er also ergriffen ist von GOtt, daß er ihn zu einer Pein und einem Tod der Sünde, so bald im Anfang des Todes verordnet hat. Denn das hat bedeutet, daß, als er des Adams Tod zuvor im Gebot geweissagt hatte, dennoch darnach nicht geschwiegen hat, sondern den Tod von neuem an aufgelegt und den Ernst des Gebots gemäßigt; ja, des Todes auch nicht mit einer einigen Silbe gedacht hat, sondern allein gesagt: „Du bist Pulver oder Staub, und wirst wieder zu Staube werden, bis du wieder kommest in die Erde, daraus du genommen bist“, 1 Mos. 3, 19. Als wäre er dem Tode bereits so gram, daß er ihn auch nicht nennen wollte, laut dieses

stabbed with its own weapon, and, like Goliath, is beheaded with its own sword. [1 Sam. 17:51] For Goliath also was a type of sin, a giant terrible to all save the young lad David—that is Christ,—who single-handed laid him low, and having cut off his head with his own sword, said afterward that there was no better sword than the sword of Goliath (I. Samuel xxi). [1 Sam. 21:9]

Therefore, if we meditate on these joys of the power Christ, and these gifts of His grace, how can any small evil distress us, the while we see such blessings in this great evil that is to come!

Spruchs im 30. Psalm, V. 6.: „Denn der Zorn ist in seinem Unwillen und das Leben in seinem Willen.“ Als wollte er sagen: wenn der Tod nicht vonnöthen gewesen wäre zu der Austilgung der Sünde, so wollte er ihn weder wissen noch nennen, und viel weniger aufgelegt haben.

72. Sogar hat der göttliche Unwille wider die Sünde, die den Tod gewirket hat, nichts anders, denn den Tod bewappnet und gerüstet, daß man allhier, nach Laut des Poeten, sehen möchte, daß der Ursacher des Todes durch seine Kunst umkommt und verdirbt, und die Sünde von ihrer eigenen Frucht vertilgt und durch den Tod, den sie geboren hat, gleichwie die vergiftete Schlangenart, Vipera, von ihren Jungen erwürgt wird. Und ist das allerschönste Schauspiel, wenn man sieht, daß die Sünde nicht durch ein fremdes, sondern ihr eigenes Werk vertilget, mit ihrem eigenen Schwert erstochen, und gleichwie dem Goliath geschah, ihr Haupt mit ihrem eigenen Messer abgeschlagen wird, 1 Sam. 17, 51. Denn der Goliath ist eine Figur der Sünde gewesen, ein schrecklicher, grausamer Riese, vor dem sich alle Menschen entsetzt haben, ausgenommen der kleine David, das ist, der HErr Christus, der ihn allein erlegt hat und ihm sein Haupt mit seinem eigenen Schwert, das das allerbeste Schwert gewesen ist, wie man lieft im ersten Buch der Könige am 21. Capitel, V. 9., abgehauen hat. Derhalben, wenn wir diese Freude der Stärke des HErrn Christi und seine Gaben und Gnade betrachten, so wird uns das Uebel durch das Uebel nicht anfechten, peinigen und beschweren, weil wir in einem so großen zukünftigen Uebel so große Güter sehen.

CAPUT TERCIUM
de tercio spectro,

quod est bonum praeteritum seu post se.

Huius boni facilis est consyderatio ex spectro suo contrario de praeterito malo: tamen iuvemus consyderantem. In hac re eximius est artifex B. Augustinus in suis confessionibus, ubi pulcherrime recitat dei beneficia in se ab utero matris suae. Idem facit insignis psalmus cxxxviij. 'Domine, probasti me' [Ps. 139:2], ubi inter caetera providentiam dei super se miratus dicit: Intellexisti cogitationes meas de longe, semitam meam et funiculum meum investigasti, quasi dicat 'Quicquid ego unquam cogitavi, quicquid operatus fui, et quantum essem consecuturus ac possessurus, iam video, quam non mea industria gesta sunt sed tua cura longe ante haec ordinata, denique omnes vias meas praevidisti', Et non est sermo in lingua mea: ubi tunc? in potestate tua.

Haec discimus experientia propria: si enim vitam praeteritam recolimus, nonne stupor est nos talia cogitasse, voluisse, foecisse, dixisse, qualia nos nec praevidere potuimus? quam longe alia gessissemus, si nostro libero arbitrio relicti fuissemus! Id quod nunc primum intelligimus, tam praesentem scilicet curam dei, tam constantem sollicitudinem eius super nos fuisse cernimus, ut nec loqui nec velle nec cogitare potuerimus, nisi quod ille dedisset, Sicut Sap. vij. dicit: In manu enim illius et nos et sermones nostri [Sap. 7:16], et Paulus: Qui operatur omnia in nobis [I Cor. 12:6]. Quin ergo pudescimus insensati et duricordes, qui propria experientia docti videmus, quam sollicitus pro nobis fuerit in hanc horam dominus et omnia bona nobis dederit?

Der dritte Unterscheid,

von dem vergangenen Gut.

73. Die Betrachtung dieses Guts ist leicht aus seinem Gegenbild von dem vergangenen Uebel zu nehmen. Aber nichts desto weniger will ich zu dieser Betrachtung eine Forderung thun, darinnen St. Augustin Wunder erdichtet, und meisterlich ist im Buch seiner Beichte, in welchem er auf's allerzierlichste erzählt die Wohlthaten GOttes gegen ihn aus seiner Mutter Leib, wie denn auch der vortreffliche 139. Psalm, V. 1.: „O HErr, du hast mich versuchet", thut; der unter andern sich über der Vorsicht GOttes gegen ihn verwundert und sagt, V. 2.: „O HErr, du hast meine Gedanken verstanden von ferne, und meine Steige und Stricke erforschet." Als wollte er sagen: Alles, das ich gethan oder gewirkt habe, und so viel ich erlangt, bekommen und besessen habe, sehe ich nun, wie gar ich's nicht durch meinen Verstand, Fleiß und Zuthun, sondern durch deine Vorsorge, darauf lange Zeit zuvor gerichtet, erlangt habe. Endlich V. 3. 4.: „Hast du auch alle meine Wege zuvor gesehen. Es ist auch keine Rede in meiner Zunge." Ei, wo denn? „In deiner Gewalt." Das lernen wir alles aus eigener Erfahrung. Denn wenn wir unser vergangen Leben betrachten, so verwundern wir uns, daß wir gedacht, geredet, gewollt und gethan haben, darauf wir nicht haben mögen zuvor gedenken.

74. O wohl viel anders hätten wir's ausgerichtet, wenn es in unserm freien Willen gestanden wäre; das wir nun erst verstehen und sehen, daß die Sorgfältigkeit GOttes so gegenwärtig, stark und kräftig, und seine Sorge für uns

CHAPTER III

The Third Image

The Past Blessing or the Blessing Behind Us

The consideration of this image is not difficult, in view of its counterpart, of the past evils; we would, however, aid him who undertakes it. Here St. Augustine shows himself an excellent master, in his Confessions, in which he gives a beautiful rehearsal of the benefits of God toward him from his mother's womb.[296] The same is done in that fine Psalm cxxxvii, "Lord, Thou hast searched me," [Ps. 139:2] where the Psalmist, marveled among other things at the goodness of God toward him, says, "Thou understandest my thoughts afar off, Thou compassest my path and my lying down." Which is as though he said, Whatever I have thought or done, whatever I shall achieve and possess, I see now that it is not the result of my industry, but was ordered long ago by Thy care. "And there is no speech in my tongue."[297] Where is it then? In Thy power.

We learn this from our own experience. For if we reflect on our past life, is it not a wonder that we thought, desired, did and said that which we were not able to foresee? How far different our course would have been, had we been left to our own free will! Now only do we understand it, and see how constantly God's present care and providence were over us, so that we could neither think nor speak nor will anything except as He gave us leave. As it is said in Wisdom vii, "In His hands are both we and our words"; [Wisd. 7:16] and by Paul, "Who worketh all in all." [1 Cor. 12:6] Ought not we, insensate and hard of heart, to bang our heads in shame, when we learn from

Necdum possumus eandem nostri curam ei in parvulo praesenti malo tradere, ac ita facimus, quasi ille nos reliquerit aut relinquere ullo modo possit? Non sic ps. xxxix. Ego vero egenus et pauper, dominus sollicitus est mei [Ps. 40:17], ubi B. Augustinus: Habeat curam tui qui foecit te: qui habuit curam tui, antequam esses, quomodo non habebit curam, cum iam hoc es, quod voluit ut esses? At nos imperium cum deo divisum accipimus: illi tribuimus, quod fecerit nos, atque idipsum tamen vix aut tepide, nobis arrogamus curam nostri, quasi ille fecerit nos et mox abierit relictis nobis in nostra manu regendis.

Quod si nobis nostra obstant sapientia et consilia, ut hanc curam dei super nos non videamus, dum forte multa evenerint secundum nostra proposita, redeamus cum ps. cxxxviij. ad nostrum intuitum: Non est occultatum os meum a te, quod foecisti in occulto [Ps. 139:15] (id est, ossa mea in ventre matris tu videbas et formabas, quando ego nondum eram, quando mater mea nondum sciebat, quid fieret in ea) et substantia mea in inferioribus terrae (id est, figura seu forma corporis mei in visceribus infimis matris meae etiam non fuit tibi abscondita, quia formabas tu eam). Quid enim his verbis vult nisi ingenti hoc exemplo nobis ostendere, quam deus nostri sine nobis semper curam habuerit? Quis enim potest gloriari se cooperatum, ut formaretur in utero? Quis dedit matri curam, ut lactaret, foveret, amaret et omnia illa materna officia exhiberet, cum nos necdum sentiremus vitam nostram, denique quorum, nisi in aliis similia facta videntes crederemus et nobiscum facta esse, nihil sciremus nec memores essemus, cum haec non aliter nobis impensa sunt quam si

stehet und beständig gewesen, daß wir's weder gedenken, noch reden, noch wollen, oder im Willen zu haben vermocht haben, allein was uns GOtt gegeben hat. Wie im 7. Capitel der Weisheit, V. 16., steht: „In seiner Hand sind wir und unsere Rede“; und St. Paulus, 1 Cor. 12, 6.: „Der alle Dinge in uns wirket.“ Warum schämen wir uns unsinnige, grobe und hartherzige Menschen nicht, die wir aus eigener Erfahrung gelernt haben und sehen, daß GOtt der HErr so sorgfältig für uns bis in diese Stunde gewesen ist und uns alle Güter gegeben hat. Und mögen dennoch die Sorge für uns in einem kleinen Uebel oder gegenwärtigem unglücklichem Zustehen ihm nicht übergeben, und thun eben, als hätte uns GOtt verlassen, oder möchte uns mit nichte verlassen. Aber es lautet im 40. Psalm, V. 18., anders, da also steht: „Aber ich bin ein armer Dürftiger, und der HErr ist für mich sorgfältig.“ Da St. Augustinus spricht: Ei, wie sollte er nicht sorgfältig sein, weil du nun bist, das er dich hat wollen sein? Laß den für dich sorgen, der dich geschaffen hat, der für dich gesorgt hat, ehe du bist geschaffen worden. Aber wir nehmen das Reich in die Herrschaft mit GOtt zu theile. Wir geben GOtt zu, und doch schwerlich ungenugsamlich, übel und los, daß er uns geschaffen hat, und unterstehen uns unsere selbst Sorgfältigkeit zu tragen und haben, eben als hätte uns GOtt geschaffen und wäre so bald davon gegangen, und hätte uns nachgelassen uns selbst zu regieren.

75. Weil nun unsere Weisheit, Rathschläge und Bedenken uns verhindern, daß wir diese Sorgfältigkeit GOttes für uns nicht sehen können, wenn zuweilen uns viel Sachen nach unserm Willen und Gefallen ergehen. Derhalben

our own experience how our Lord hath cared for us unto this hour, and given us every blessing? And yet we cannot commit our care to Him in a small present evil, and act as if He had forsaken us, or ever could forsake us! Not so the Psalmist, in Psalm xxxix, “I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh on me.” [Ps. 40:17] On which St. Augustine has this comment: “Let Him care for thee, Who made thee. He Who cared for thee before thou wast, how shall He not care for thee now thou art that which He willed thee to be?”[298] But we divide the kingdom with God; to Him we grant (and even that but grudgingly) that He hath made us, but to ourselves we arrogate the care over ourselves; as though He had made us, and then straightway departed, and left the government of ourselves in our own hands.

But if our wisdom and foresight blind us to the care that God hath over us, because perchance many things have fallen out according to our plans, let us turn again, with Psalm cxxxviii, and look in upon ourselves. “My substance was not hid from Thee when I was made in secret”—that is, Thou didst behold and didst fashion my bones in my mother's womb, when as yet I was not, and my mother knew not what was forming in her;—"and my substance was curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth”—that is, even the form and fashion of my body in the secret chambers of the womb were not hidden from Thee, for Thou wast fashioning it. What does the Psalmist intend with such words but to show us by this marvelous illustration how God hath always been caring for us without our help! For who can boast that he took any part in his

[296] PE: *The Confessions of St. Augustine*, 1, ch. vi.
[297] PE: Thus the Vulgate.
[298] PE: *Comm. in Ps. xxxix, No. 27.*

dormientibus, immo mortuis ac potius nondum natis impenderentur, quantum ad nostram pertinet notitiam?

Ita videmus, quam sine nobis nos excipiant divinae miserationes et consolationes. Adhuc dubitamus aut etiam desperamus, nostri curam illi usque hodie esse. Si quem haec experientia non erudit nec movet, nescio quid erudire et movere possit. Hanc enim videmus passim in omnibus infantulis praesentissime nobis expositam, ita ut nostrae insipientiae et duritiae tot exempla proposita merito nobis debeant esse magno pudori, si dubitemus vel levissimum bonum vel malum sine singulari cura dei nobis contingere. Sic B. Petrus i. Pe. v. Omnem sollicitudinem proiicientes in eum, quoniam ipsi est cura de vobis [I Pet. 5:7]. Et ps. xxxvi. Iacta super dominum curam tuam, et ipse te enutriet [Pss. 37:5; 55:22]. Et B. Augustinus ad animam suam in Confessionibus: Quid super te stas et non stas? proiice te in eum: non enim subtrahet manum, ut ruas. Et iterum i. Pe. iiij. Itaque et hii, qui patiuntur secundum voluntatem dei, fideli creatori commendent animas suas in benefactis [I Petr. 4:19].

O siquis hac ratione deum suum cognosceret, quam securus, quam quietus, quam iucundus ageret! Hic vere deum haberet, sciens certo, omnia sua, quaecunque illa essent, illius suavissima voluntate disponente sibi obtigisse et obtingere. Stat firma sententia Petri 'ipsi est cura de vobis' [I Petr. 5:7]. Quid hoc verbo dulcius audire possumus? 'ideo proiicite omnem, inquit, sollicitudinem in eum'. Quod si hoc non facimus et nos ipsi pro nobis solliciti sumus, quid aliud facimus quam quod et dei curam impedire conamur, et simul nobis aetatem nostram tristem, laboriosam, anxiam

sollen wir mit dem 139. Psalm, V. 15., wiederum zu unserm Anfang kommen: „Mein Gebeine, das du in geheim geschaffen hast, ist nicht verborgen worden", das ist, du sahest meine Gebeine in meiner Mutter Leibe, und machtest dieselben, da ich noch ungeboren war, da meine Mutter noch nicht wußte, was in ihr gemacht wurde, „und mein selbständig Wesen in den untern des Erdreichs"; das ist, die Gestalt oder Form meines Leibes in den untersten Theilen meiner Mutter ist dir auch unverborgen gewesen, denn du hast sie gemacht. Denn der Prophet meint mit diesen Worten nichts anders, denn daß er hat mit diesem großen Vorbild anzeigen und weisen wollen, wie sehr sorgfältig GOtt allezeit für uns gewesen ist. Denn wer mag sich berühmen, daß er hätte mitgewirkt im mütterlichen Leibe? Wer hat der Mutter die Sorge geben, das Kind zu säugen, zu unterhalten, zu erziehen, zu lieben und ihm alle mütterliche treue Meinung zu erzeigen? so wir doch die Zeit unsers Lebens noch nicht empfunden haben, und wir wußten noch gedachten gar nichts an der Stücke keines, daß es mit uns also damit zugegangen wäre, wenn wir nicht sähen, daß dergleichen andern Leuten begegnet wäre. Denn dies alles ist uns, eben als hätten wir damals geschlafen, ja, eben als wären wir wie todt gewesen, erzeigt worden, und als wären wir noch nicht geboren, so viel es unser Wissen davon betrifft.

76. Also sehen wir, wie gar an uns die göttliche Erbarmung und Vertröstung unser gewahr nehmen. Dennoch zweifeln oder verzweifeln wir daran, als hätte GOtt nicht noch des heutigen Tages Sorge für uns. Und wenn diese Erfahrung einen Menschen nicht unterweiset noch bewegt, so wüßte ich nicht, was ihn möchte unterweisen

formation in the womb? Who gave to our mother that loving care wherewith she fed and fondled and caressed us, and performed all those duties of motherhood, when we had as yet no consciousness of our life, and when we should neither know nor remember these things, but that, seeing the same things done to others, we believe that they were done to us also? For they were performed on us as though we had been asleep, nay dead, or rather not yet born, so far as our knowledge of them is concerned.

Thus we see how the divine mercies and consolations bear us up, without our doing. And still we doubt, or even despair, that He is caring for us to-day. If this experience does not instruct and move one, I know not what will. For we have it brought home to us again and again, in every little child we meet; so that so many examples proposed to our foolishness and hardness of heart may well fill us with deep shame, if we doubt that the slightest blessing or evil can come to us without the particular care of God. Thus St Peter says, "Casting all your care upon Him, because He careth for you." [1 Pet. 5:7] And Psalm xxxvi, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He will sustain thee." [Pss. 37:5; 55:22] And St. Augustine, in the Confessions, [299] addresses his soul on this wise: "Why dost thou stand upon thyself, and dost not stand? Cast thyself on Him; for He will not withdraw His hand and let thee fall." Again, we read in I. Peter iv, "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator." [1 Pet. 4:19]

O could a man attain unto such a knowledge of his God, how safely, how quietly, how joyfully, would he fare!

[299] Augustine, *Confessions,* 8, caput 11.

multis timoribus, curis, tumultibus facimus? atque id frustra: nec enim quicquam his promovemus salubriter, sed, ut Ecclesiastes dicit, haec vanitas est vanitatum et afflictio spiritus [Eccl. 1:2, 14]: nam et idem libellus totus in hanc experientiam loquitur, ut qui multa pro se tentaverit et in omnibus tamen non nisi laborem, vanitatem et afflictionem spiritus invenerit, Ita ut concludat, donum dei esse, siquis edat et bibat et laetetur cum uxore sua [Eccl. 5:18; 9:7, 9], id est, sine sollicitudine vixerit deo commendata cura sui. Quare et nos nulla alia super nos sollicitudine solliciti esse debemus, quam ne super nos solliciti simus et deo curam nostri rapiamus. Caetera ex spectro contrario (ut dixi) et ex recordatione totius vitae praeteritae quilibet facile sibi comparabit.

und bewegen. Diese Sorgfältigkeit GOttes für uns sehen wir gemeiniglich in allen unmündigen Kindern auf's allerkräftigste angezeigt, also daß so viel Vorbild unserer Unweisheit und Härtigkeit uns billig sollen eine große Scham sein, wenn wir daran zweifeln, daß auch das allergeringste Gut oder Uebel uns ohne sonderliche Sorgfältigkeit GOttes begegnet. Also sagt St. Peter in seiner ersten Epistel am 5. Capitel, V. 7.: „Ihr sollt alle eure Sorgfältigkeit in den HErrn werfen, denn er nimmt euer gewahr.“ Und im 55. Psalm, V. 23.: „Wirf auf den HErrn deine Sorge, so wird er dich ernähren“; und St. Augustinus zu seiner Seele im Buch seiner Beichte: Was stehest du auf dir, und stehest doch nicht, wirf dich in den HErrn, denn er wird seine Hände nicht abziehen, daß du zu Fall kommest; und St. Peter in seiner ersten Epistel am 4. Capitel, V. 19.: „Derhalben auch die da leiden nach dem Willen GOttes, sollen in den Wohlthaten ihre Seelen GOtt, dem getreuen Schöpfer, befehlen.“

77. O, wenn ein Mensch durch diese Weise seinen GOtt erkennet; wohl sicher, wohl geruhsam und wohl fröhlich lebet er. Derselbige Mensch hätte wahrhaftiglich GOtt, und wüßte eigentlich, daß alles das, so ihm begegnet, durch Schickung des allerbarmherzigsten und allergütigsten Willens GOttes ihm widerführe. Darum ist St. Peters Meinung eine feste, stete Meinung, da er sagt, 1. Ep. 5, 7.: „GOtt hat Sorge für euch“; was können wir Lieblicheres und Süßeres denn ein solch Wort hören? Darum sagt er, „werfet alle eure Sorgfältigkeit in ihn.“ Wenn wir aber das nicht thun, sondern sein für uns selbst sorgfältig; was thun wir anders, denn daß wir uns unterwinden GOttes Sorgfältigkeit zu verhindern und die Zeit unsers Lebens uns mit viel Fürchten, Sorgen, Aufrühren betrübt, arbeitsam und ängstiglich machen?

He would in truth have God on his side, knowing this of a certainty, that all his fortunes, whatever they might be, had come to him, and still were coming, under the guidance of His most sweet will. The word of Peter stands firm, “He careth for you.” [1 Pet. 5:7] What sweeter sound than this word can we hear! Therefore, he says, “Cast all your care upon Him.” If we do this not, but rather take our care upon ourselves, what is this but to seek to binder the care of God, and, besides, to make our life a life of sorrow and labor, troubled with many fears and cares and much unrest! And all to no avail; for we accomplish nothing good thereby, but, as the Preacher saith, it is vanity of vanities, and vexation of spirit. [Eccl. 1:2, 14] Indeed, that whole book treats of this experience, as written by one who for himself made trial of many things, and found them all only weariness, vanity and vexation of spirit, so that he concludes it is a gilt of God that a man may eat and drink and live joyfully with his wife [Eccl. 5:18; 9:7, 9], i.e., when he passes his days without anxiety, and commits his care to God. Therefore, we ought to have no other care for ourselves than this, namely, not to care for ourselves, and rob God of His care for us.

Whatever remains to be said, will easily be gathered from the corresponding image of evils, as I have said, and from the contemplation of one's past life.

CAPUT QUARTUM
de spectro quarto,

quod est bonum infernum
seu infra nos.

Hucusque bona vidimus quae nostra sunt et in nobisipsis: deinceps ea quae in aliis et extra nos posita sunt videamus. Quorum primum est in his qui infra nos sunt, id est mortui et damnati. Sed mirum quid boni in mortuis et damnatis possit inveniri? Verum tanta est ubique divinae bonitatis virtus, ut in summis malis etiam bona det videre. Conferimus autem illos primum ad nos, tunc videmus inaestimabilia nostra lucra, sicut facile ex contrario malorum spectro accipi potest. Nam quanta illic mortis et inferni

Und dennoch alles vergeblich, denn wir richten damit nichts Heilwärtiges aus.

78. Aber wie der weise Mann sagt, Pred. 1, 14.: „Das ist die Eitelkeit aller Eitelkeit, und eine Peinigung oder Anfechtung und Beschwerung des Geistes.“ Denn das ganze Büchlein Ecclesiastes redet von dieser Erfahrung, darum daß er sich fast vieler Sachen und Sorge unterstanden und doch nichts anders, denn die Arbeit und Mühe der Eitelkeit und die Peinigung des Geistes gefunden hat. Also, daß er endlich beschließt, es sei GOttes Gabe, wenn ein Mensch esse, trinke und fröhlich sei mit seiner Hausfrau, Pred. 5, 18., das ist, weil er ohne Sorgfältigkeit lebet und GOtt die Sorge für ihn befiehlet. Darum sollen wir auch keine andere Sorgfältigkeit für uns tragen, denn daß wir für uns nicht sorgfältig sein, und GOtt die Sorge für uns nicht aus seinen Händen nehmen. Das andere alles wird ein jeglicher ihm aus dem Gegenbild dieses künftigen Guten, das ist, aus dem künftigen Uebel, wie ich gesagt, und aus der Betrachtung des vergangenen Lebens, leichtlich nehmen.

Der vierte Unterscheid,

von dem untern Gut.

79. Bisanher haben wir gesehen solche Güter, die unser selbst und in uns sein. Hinfort werden wir sehen Güter, die in andern und außerhalben uns sein. Unter welchen das erste Gut in denen ist, die unter uns sein, das sein die Todten und Verdammten. Aber das möchte sich einer verwundern, was man Gutes in den Todten und Verdammten könnte finden. Aber die Kraft der göttlichen Güte ist überall und allenthalben so groß, daß vielleicht auch in den allergrößten Uebeln gute Dinge zu sehen. Wenn wir nun

CHAPTER IV

The Fourth Image

The Infernal Blessing or the Blessing Beneath Us

Thus far we have considered the blessings which are ours, and are found within ourselves; let us now turn to those blessings that are without us, and are found in others. The first of these is found in those who are beneath us, that is, the dead and damned. Do you wonder what kind of blessing can be discovered in the dead and damned? But the power of the divine goodness is everywhere so great that it grants us to descry blessings in the very greatest evils. Comparing, then, these poor wretches, first of all, with

mala in eis videmus, tot sine dubio lucra nostra videmus, tantoque maiora, quanto illorum mala fuerint maiora. Quae omnia non sunt levi corde contemnenda, quia misericordiam dei magnificentissimam nobis vehementer commendant. Et periculum est, si haec parvi duxerimus, ingrati inveniamur, simil cum illis damnandi aut peius cruciandi. propterea quantum illos dolere et ullulare viderimus, tanto magis de dei bonitate in nos gaudere debemus, iuxta illud Isa. lxv. Ecce servi mei comedent, et vos esurietis. Ecce servi mei bibent, et vos sitietis. Ecce servi mei laetabuntur, et vos confundemini. Ecce servi mei laudabunt prae exultatione cordis, et vos clamabitis prae dolore cordis et prae contritione spiritus ullulabitis, et dimittetis nomen vestrum in iuramentum electis meis &c. [Isa. 65:13 ff.] Denique, ut dixi, exempla male morientium et damnatorum (sicut et B. Gregorius in dialogo refert) nobis ad monitorium et bonum eruditionis proficiunt, ut foelix sit, quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum. Hoc sane bonum, quia vulgariter notum est, parum movet, cum sit tamen inter maxima numerandum et his qui sensato sunt corde non modica existimatione probatum, cum huc vergat magna pars sacrae totius scripturae, videlicet ubi de ira, iudiciis, comminationibus dei docetur. Quas saluberrimas doctrinas miserrimorum exempla nobis saluberrime confirmant, quae tunc primum efficatia sunt, si illorum qui ea ferunt affectum induti fuerimus, ac velut in loco et persona eorum simus: tunc enim movebunt et monebunt nos ad laudem bonitatis dei, qui nos ab his servarit.

Conferimus vero illos etiam ad deum ipsum, quo divinam iustitiam in eis videamus. Hoc etsi arduum est,

die Todten und Verdammten gegen uns vergleichen, so sehen wir unsere unschätzlichen Güter und Gewinn; wie denn aus dem Gegenbilde der bösen Dinge leichtlich mag genommen werden. Denn so große Uebel des Todes und der Hölle wir in ihnen sehen, so viel wir ohne Zweifel unser Gewinn in uns sehen; und so viel größere Gewinne, wie viel größere der Todten und Verdammten Uebel sein; welches alles nicht mit einem leichtfertigen Herzen soll verachtet werden, denn sie preisen uns merklich die allergrößeste Barmherzigkeit GOttes. Es ist auch zu besorgen, wenn wir das geringe achten werden, daß wir werden undankbar befunden werden und zusammt den Verdammten verdammt, aber desto schwerer und härter gepeinigt werden.

80. Derhalben, je mehr wir werden sehen die Verdammten leiden und heulen, so viel mehr sollen wir uns erfreuen der Güte GOttes gegen uns; laut des Spruchs Jesaiä 65, 13—15.: „Nehmet wahr, meine Knechte werden essen, und euch wird hungern. Nehmet wahr, meine Knechte werden trinken, und euch wird dürsten. Nehmet wahr, meine Knechte werden fröhlich sein, und ihr werdet Betrübniß, Leid und Schande haben. Nehmet wahr, meine Knechte werden loben und vor Freuden des Herzens aufspringen, und ihr werdet schreien vor Schmerzen des Herzens, und ihr werdet vor Zerreibung des Geistes heulen und euren Namen zu einem Schwur oder Eid meinen Auswählten verlassen.“ Und wie ich gesagt habe, die Vorbilder der übel Sterbenden und Verdammten, wie auch St. Gregorius im Dialog schreibt, dienen uns zu einer Erinnerung, Nutz und Frommen der Unterweisung und Lehre, also daß der Mensch selig ist, den fremde

ourselves, we see how unspeakable is our gain; as may be gathered from the corresponding image of evils. For great as are the evils of death and hell that we see in them, so great certainly are the gains that we behold in ourselves. These things are not to be lightly passed over, for they forcibly commend to us the magnificent mercy of God. And we run the danger, if we lightly esteem them, of being found ungrateful, and of being condemned together with these men, and even more cruelly tormented. Therefore, when we perceive how they suffer and wail aloud, we ought so much the more to rejoice in the goodness of God toward us; according to Isaiah lxv: “Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry; behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty; behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed; behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart; and shall howl for vexation of spirit. And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen.” [Isa. 65:13 ff.] In short, as I have said, the examples of those who die in their sins and are damned are profitable unto us for admonition and instruction, as St. Gregory also observes in his Dialogues;[300] so that

Happy are they who caution gain
From that that which caused another's pain.

This blessing, indeed, affects us but little, because it is so common and well known; nevertheless, it is to be ranked among the very highest blessings, and is comforted of no slight value by those who have an understanding heart; and many are the passages of Scripture that bear upon it, those, namely, which

[300] PE: *Gregor. dialogorum libri iv*, containing number of examples of the terrible end of the wicked. [Text at: https://www.tertullian.org/fathers/gregory_04_dialogues_book4.htm]

tamen conandum est. Nam cum sit deus iustus iudex, iustitiam eius diligi et laudari oportet, atque ita in deo gaudere etiam tunc, quando malos male perdit in corpore et anima, quia in his omnibus summa sua et ineffabilis iustitia lucet. Itaque infernus quoque plenus est deo et summo bono non minus quam coelum. Iustitia enim dei ipse deus est, deus vero summum bonum est. Quare ut misericordia, ita et iustitia eius seu iudicium summe amandum, laudandum, praedicandum est. Hoc sensu David dicit: Laetabitur iustus, cum viderit vindictam, manus suas lavabit in sanguine peccatoris [Ps. 58:10]. Hac ratione prohibuit dominus Samuelem i. Reg. xvi. ne amplius Saulem lugeret, dicens: Usque quo tu luges Saul, cum ego proiecerim eum, ne regnet super Israel? [I Sam. 16:1] Quasi diceret 'adeo ne voluntas mea tibi displicet, ut hominis voluntatem mihi praeferas?' Denique haec est illa vox laudis et gaudii per totum psalterium, quod dominus sit iudex viduarum et pater orphanorum, quod facturus sit vindictam pauperum et iudicium inopis, quod confundentur inimici, perdentur impii, [Ps. 68:5, 149:12] et multa similia. Quod si quis generationi illi sanguinum, quae occidit iustos, etiam filium dei, et impiorum cumulo velit stulta misericordia compati, iam invenietur eorum congaudere iniquitati et probare ea quae gesserunt, dignus qui cum eis similiter pereat, quorum peccata nolit vindicari, audietque illud ij. Reg. xix. Diligis odientes te et odio habes diligentes te [II Sam. 19:6]. Sic enim Ioab ad David dicebat, quando Absalom, impium homicidam suum, nimis lugebat. Quare in hoc spectro congaudendum est universae sanctorum pietati et iustitiae dei, quae persecutores pietatis iustissime punit, ut liberet suos electos ab eis. Atque ita vides non parva sed summa bona in mortuis et damnatis

Gefährlichkeiten vorsichtig und klug machen.

81. Dies Gut, weil es nicht männiglich bekannt ist, bewegt es wenig und gehet wenig Leuten zu Herzen; so es doch soll billig unter den allergrößten Gütern gezählt werden und von rechtsinnigen Menschen merklich erfahren und bewähret ist. Denn der mehrere Theil der ganzen heiligen Schrift zieht sich daher und auf diese Meinung, als nämlich, da sie sagt von dem Zorn, von den Gerichten und Urtheilen, und den Bedräuungen GOttes, welche allerheilsamste Lehre und Unterweisung uns die Vorbilder der Verdammten bestätigen. Welche sodann kräftig sein, wenn wir deren, so mit solcher Beschwerung beladen sein, Meinung an uns nehmen und uns bedünken lassen, eben als wären wir an ihrer Statt und in ihrer Person. Denn also werden sie uns bewegen, ermahnen und erinnern, zu loben die Güte und Barmherzigkeit GOttes, daß sie uns vor solchen Uebeln behütet und bewahret hat.

82. Auch halten wir die Verstorbenen und Verdammten gegen GOtt, die göttliche Gerechtigkeit in ihnen zu sehen, und ob das wohl schwer ist, so soll man doch Fleiß darin haben. Denn weil GOtt ein gerechter Richter ist, so muß seine Gerechtigkeit geliebt und gelobt, und also Freude in GOtt gehabt werden, auch zu der Zeit, wenn er die bösen Menschen an Leib und Seele verderbet. Denn in dem allen erscheint die allerhöchste und unaussprechliche Gerechtigkeit GOttes. Derhalben auch die Hölle voller GOttes ist und des allerhöchsten Gutes, nicht weniger denn der Himmel. Denn die Gerechtigkeit ist GOtt selbst, aber GOtt ist das allerhöchste Gut. Derohalben soll man eben, wie die Barmherzigkeit, also auch die Gerechtigkeit oder das Gericht GOttes auf's höchste lieben, loben, preisen und predigen. Also sagt

treat of the wrath, the judgments, and the threatenings of God. These most wholesome teachings are confirmed to us by the examples of those wretched men; and their examples only then have their effect on us, when we enter into the feelings of them that endure such things, and put ourselves as it were in their very place. Then will they move and admonish us to praise the goodness of God, Who has preserved us from those evils.

But let us also compare them with God, that we may see the divine justice in their case. Although this is a difficult task, yet it must be essayed. Now, since God is a just Judge, we must love and laud His justice, and thus rejoice in our God, even when He miserably destroys the wicked, in body and soul; for in all this His high, unspeakable justice shines forth. And so even hell, no less than heaven, is full of God and the highest good. For the justice of God is God Himself; and God is the highest good. Therefore, even as His mercy, so must His justice or judgment be loved, praised, and glorified above all things. In this sense David says, "The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance; he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked." [Ps. 58:10] It was for this reason that the Lord forbade Samuel to mourn any longer for Saul (I. Samuel xvi), saying, "How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel?" [1 Sam. 16:1] As who should say, "Does My will so sorely displease thee, that thou preferrest the will of man to Me?" In short, this is the voice of praise and joy resounding through the whole Psalter,—that the Lord is the judge of the widow, and a father of the fatherless; that He will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and the right of the poor; that His enemies all be confounded, and the ungodly shall perish; [Ps. 68:5, 149:12] and many

lucere, Nempe vindicatam omnium sanctorum iniuriam et tuam quoque, si iustus es cum eis. Quid ergo mirum, si et per tuum praesens malum vindicet hostem tuum, id est peccatum corporis tui? immo gaudendum tibi in hoc officio optimae iustitiae dei, quae etiam te non rogante pessimum tuum hostem, id est peccatum tuum in teipso, sic occidit ac perdit. Cui si compatiaris, amicus peccati et hostis iustitiae in te operantis invenieris, quod tibi summe cavendum sit, ne tibi quoque dicatur 'Diligis odientes te et odis diligentes te' [II Sam. 19:6]. Sicut ergo iustitiae in tuum peccatum saevienti cum gaudio congratulari debes, ita eidem congratuleris in peccatores, omnium ac dei hostes, sevienti. Vides itaque in summis malis summa bona videri et laetari nos posse in summis malis, non propter ipsa mala sed propter summam bonitatem iustitiae nos vindicantis.

der Prophet David, Ps. 58, 11.: „Der Gerechte wird sich erfreuen, denn er wird den Rach sehen, er wird die Hände waschen in dem Blute der Sünder."

83. Diese Meinung hat GOtt auch dem Samuel verboten im ersten Buch der Könige am 16. Cap., V. 1., den König Saul länger zu klagen, und sagt: „Warum klagest du den Saul so lange, so ich ihn doch verworfen habe, über das Volk nicht zu regieren und herrschen?" Als wollte er sprechen: Mißfällt dir mein Wille so sehr, daß du den Willen des Menschen mir vorsetzest? Auch ist das die Stimme des Lobes und der Freude durch den ganzen Psalter, Ps. 68, 6. Ps. 105, 13.: Daß der HErr ist ein Richter der Wittwen, und ein Vater der Waisen. Und: Daß er wird die Armen rächen, und den Dürftigen Gericht halten, daß die Feinde werden geschändet und die ungöttlichen, unchristlichen Menschen vertilgt und verloren werden, Ps. 86, 17. Ps. 83, 18., und dergleichen viel. Wenn sich nun einer wollte unterstehen über die blutgierige Art der Menschen, so die gerechten, frommen, gottesfürchtigen Menschen und Kinder GOttes umbringen, und über den Haufen der Ungläubigen zu erbarmen und Mitleiden mit ihnen zu haben, der wird befunden, daß er eine Freude hätte in ihrer Ungerechtigkeit, und ihm wohlgefallen ließ, daß sie Uebeles gethan hätten, und hätte derhalben verdient, daß er mit ihnen und gleichwie sie verdürbe, deren Sünde und Ungerechtigkeit er will, daß sie sollen ungerochen bleiben, und würde hören den Spruch im andern Buch der Könige am 19. Cap, V. 6.: „Du hast lieb die, so dich hassen, und hassest die, so dich lieben." Denn also sagt Joab zum König David, als er den Absalom, seinen ungütigen Todfeind, und der ihm nach seinem Leib und Leben trachtet, zu sehr klagte.

similar sayings. Should any one be inclined, in foolish pity, to feel compassion for that bloody generation, that killeth the prophets, yea, the Son of God Himself, and for the company of wicked men, he will be found rejoicing in their iniquity, and approving their deeds. Such a one deserves to perish in like manner with them whose sins he would condone, and will hear the word, "Thou lovest thine enemies, and hatest thy friends." [2 Sam. 19:6] For thus Joab said unto David, when he grieved too sorely over his impious and murderous son.

Therefore, in this image, we ought to rejoice in the piety of all the saints, and in the justice of God which justly punishes the persecutors of their piety, that He may deliver His elect out of their hands. And so you may see no small blessings, but the very greatest, shining forth in the dead and damned; even the avenging of the injuries of the saints, and of your own as well, if you be righteous with them. What wonder, then, if God, by means of your present evil, should take vengeance also on your enemy, that is, the sin in your body! You ought the rather to rejoice in this work of the high justice of God, which, even without your prayer, is thus slaying and destroying your fiercest foe, namely, the sin that is within you. But, should you feel pity for it, you will be found a friend of sin, and an enemy to the justice that worketh in you. Of this beware; lest it be said also to you, "Thou lovest thine enemies, and hatest thy friends. [2 Sam. 19:6]" Therefore, as you ought joyfully to consent to the justice of God when it rages against your sin, you should do even the same when it rages against sinners, those enemies of all men and of God. You see, then, that in the greatest evils may be found the greatest blessings, and that we are able to rejoice in these evils, not on account of the evils

84. Darum soll man in diesem Bildniß eine Mitfreude mit der ganzen Gottesfurcht und Güte aller Heiligen, und mit der Gerechtigkeit GOttes haben, welche die Verfolger der christlichen Gottesfurcht auf's allergerechteste und billigste straft, seine Auserwählten von ihnen zu erlösen. Also siehest du, daß nicht kleine, sondern die allerhöchsten Güter in den Todten und Verdammten erscheinen, denn an ihnen ist gerochen aller Heiligen Injurien oder Beleidigungen, auch deine eigene Beschwerung, wenn du gerecht bist.

85. Was ist es denn für ein Wunder, wenn GOtt durch dein gegenwärtiges Uebel sich an deinem Feinde, das ist, an der Sünde deines Leibes, rächt? Ja, sollte dich erfreuen in diesem Amt der allerfrömmsten Gerechtigkeit GOttes, die auch ohne dein Bitten deine allergrößten Feinde, das ist, die Sünde in dir selbst erwürget, vertilgt und umbringt? Und wenn du darob ein Mitleiden hast, so wird man befinden dich für einen Freund der Sünde und einen Feind der Gerechtigkeit GOttes, die in dir wirkt; dafür du dich auf's allerhöchste vorsehen sollt, damit zu dir auch nicht gesagt werde: „Du liebest die, so dich hassen, und hassest die, so dich lieben“, 2 Sam. 19, 6. Darum, eben wie du sollst eine Freude haben ob der Gerechtigkeit, die mit Ernst gegen deine Sünde handelt, also sollst du dich erfreuen ob der Gerechtigkeit, die ernstlich mit den Sündern, die GOttes und aller Dinge Feind sein, umgeht. Derhalben siehst du, daß in den allerhöchsten Uebeln die allerhöchsten Güter gesehen werden, und daß wir mögen fröhlich sein in den allergrößten Uebeln, Beschwerungen und Widerwärtigkeiten, nicht von wegen derselben Uebel und Beschwerungen, sondern von wegen der allerhöchsten Gerechtigkeit, die uns rächet.

themselves, but on account of the supreme goodness of the justice of God our Avenger.

CAPITULUM QUINTUM
de spectro quinto

quod est bonum sinistrum seu ad sinistram.

Adversarii hic sunt in vita adhuc positi (nam praecedente de eis iam damnatis ac daemonibus assimilatis consyderamus): hos alio affectu intueri decet videndaque duplicia eorum bona. Primo quod temporalibus abundant, ita ut prophetae quoque eorum bonis prope commoti sint ad invidiam, ut ps. lxxij. Mei pene moti sunt pedes, pene effusi sunt gressus mei, quia zelavi super iniquos pacem peccatorum videns [Ps. 73:2 f.], et infra: Ecce ipsi peccatores et abundantes in saeculo obtinuerunt divitias [Ps. 73:12]. Hiere. xij. Iustus quidem es tu, domine, si disputem tecum: veruntamen iusta loquar ad te 'Quare via impiorum prosperatur? Bene est omnibus qui praevaricantur et inique agunt' [Iere. 12:1].

Cur enim tanta super eos bona effundit gratis et perdit, nisi ut nos soletur et ostendat, quam bonus sit iis, qui recto sunt corde, ut idem ps. lxxij. dicit? Qui malis tam bonus est, quantomagis bonis bonus erit [Ps. 73:1]! nisi quod malos nullo malo vexat, bonos vero multis malis tentat, ut non tantum in bonis praesentibus sed in absconditis quoque et futuris eum agnoscant esse bonum sibi dicantque cum eodem psalmo: Mihi vero adhaerere deo bonum est, ponere in domino spem meam [Ps. 73:28], quasi dicat 'Et si aliquid patiar, quo illos liberos video, tamen confido, quod mihi deus multo magis bonus sit quam illis'. Atque ita bona visibilia malorum nobis incitabulum sunt sperandi bona invisibilia et contemnendi mala quae patimur, non secus ac Christus Mat. vi. nos volatilia coeli et lilia agri respicere iubet,

Der fünfte Unterscheid,

von dem Gut auf der linken Seilen.

86. Allhier sein unsere Feinde, Abgünstige und Widerwärtige, so noch leben. Denn im nächsten berührten Bildniß, von dem vergangenen Gut, haben wir gehöret von unsern Feinden, die bereits verstorben, verdammet und den Teufeln vergleichet sein. Aber diese unsere Feinde, so noch leben, gebühret sich in andere Wege und Meinung anzusehen. Und es sollen ihre zweifache Güter angesehen werden. Zum ersten, daß sie die zeitlichen Güter überflüssig haben, also, daß auch die Propheten es verdrossen, und sie ihnen solche Glückseligkeit vergönnet haben. Als im 73. Psalm, V. 3. ff., stehet: Es sein meine Füße schier beweget, und meine Gänge oder Tritte schier verlaufen. Denn ich habe die Ungerechten gehasset, als ich den Frieden der Sünder gesehen habe. Und folgends, V. 12.: Nehmet wahr, die Sünder und Ueberflüssige in der Welt haben Reichthum erlanget; Jer. am 12., V. 1.: „Wahr ist es, HErr, du bist gerecht, wenn ich mit dir handele, Aber dennoch will ich die Gerechtigkeit mit dir reden: warum ist der Weg der ungöttlichen ungottesfürchtigen Menschen glückselig? Allen denen, die übel und unredlich leben und handeln, gehet es wohl und glücklich." Denn der HErr ergeußt aus keiner andern Ursache über sie so viel Güter vergeblich, und verleuret sie, allein uns damit zu trösten und anzuzeigen, wie gut, gnädig und barmherzig er ist gegen den Menschen, die eines rechten Herzens sein, wie benannter 73. Psalm, V. 1., saget.

87. Weil nun GOtt gegen den bösen

CHAPTER V

The Fifth Image

The Blessing on Our Left Hand

Here are our adversaries who are yet in this life; for in the foregoing image we considered those who are already damned and given over to devils. These we must regard with other feelings, and find in them a twofold blessing. The first is this, that they abound in temporal goods, so that even the prophets were well nigh moved to envy thereby; as we read in Psalm lxii, "But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked" [Ps. 73:2 f.]; and again, "Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches." [Ps. 73:12] And Jeremiah says, "Righteous art Thou, O Lord, when I plead with Thee: yet let me talk with Thee of Thy judgments: wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? Wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously?" [Jer. 12:1] Why does He lavish and waste so many blessings upon them except to comfort us thereby, and make us to know how good He is to "such as are of a clean heart"? as it is said in that same Psalm lxxii. If He is so good to the wicked, how good will He not be to the good? [Ps. 73:1] Except that He does not vex the wicked with any evil, yet afflicts the good with many evils, in order that they may acknowledge His goodness to them not only in the present blessings, but even in those that are hidden and yet to come, and that they may say, with the same Psalmist, "But it is good for me to draw near to God; I have put my trust in the Lord God." [Ps. 73:28]

dicens: Si ergo foenum, quod hodie est et cras in clibanum mittitur, deus sic vestit, quantomagis vos modicae fidei [Matt. 6:26 ff.]! Quare ex collatione bonorum, quibus mali abundant, et mali, quod nos patimur, fides nostra exercetur et consolatio in deum (quae sola sancta est) paratur: adeo necesse est omnia cooperari in bonum sanctis [Rom. 8:28].

Alterum bonum, quod multo mirabilius, quod eorum mala nobis bona sunt, deo sic nos curante. Nam et si peccata eorum sint scandala infirmioribus, firmioribus tamen sunt virtutis exercitium et occasio pugnae maiorisque meriti. Beatus enim vir, qui suffert tentationem, quoniam, cum probatus fuerit, accipiet coronam vitae [Iac. 1:12]. Quae vero maior tentatio quam multitudo illa pessimorum exemplorum? Denique hinc mundus unus hostium appellatur sanctorum dei, quod suis illecebris et impiis operibus nos irritat, provocat, allicit de via dei in viam suam, sicut Gen. vi. Viderunt filii dei filias hominum, quod essent pulchrae, et caro facti sunt [Gen. 6:2,3], et Numeri xxv. Filii Israel ceciderunt cum filiabus Moabitarum [Num. 25:1], ita ut salutare sit nos semper aliquo incommodo premi, ne mundi scandalis offensi ruamus et peccemus nos infirmi. Sic Lot commendatur a Petro ij. Pet. ij. quod a Zodomitarum pessimis exemplis multa passus sit, ut in iustitia sua per haec promoverit [II Pet. 2:8]. Necesse est ergo, ut haec scandala veniant, quae operentur nobis pugnam et victoriam: ve tamen mundo a scandalis [Matth. 18:7]! Si autem in peccatis aliorum tanta nobis bona procurat deus, quanto magis in nostro incommodo nobis bonum operaturus toto corde credi debet, etsi sensus et caro aliud iudicet!

Menschen so gut und fromm ist; ei, wie viel frommer, gütiger und lieblicher wird er gegen den Frommen sein? Allein, daß er die bösen Menschen mit keinem Uebel beschweret, sondern die frommen Menschen mit viel Uebeln, Beschwerungen und Widerwärtigkeiten angreifet, daß sie nicht allein in den gegenwärtigen guten Dingen und glückseligen Zustehungen, sondern auch in den verborgenen und künftigen Gütern ihn fromm und gut erkennen und vermerken, und mit dem bemeldten Psalm sprechen, V. 28.: „Aber mir ist gut, daß ich meinem GOtt anhängig bin, und meine Hoffnung in den Herrn setze.“ Als wollte er sprechen: Ob ich wohl etwas leide, deß ich die ledig und frei fehe, dennoch bin ich des Vertrauens, GOtt sei mir gütiger denn ihnen.

88. Und also sein die sichtbaren Güter und unglückselige Wohlfahrt der bösen Menschen uns eine Erregung, Reizung und Erinnerung, die unsichtbaren Güter zu verhoffen, und die sichtbaren Uebel, so wir leiden, zu verachten. Gleichwie unser HErr und Seligmacher Christus, Matth. am 6, 26. 28. 30., uns heißt die Vögel des Himmels und die Lilien des Ackers ansehen und saget: Weil nun GOtt das Heu, so heut ist, und morgen in den Backofen geworfen wird, allso zieret und kleidet; wie viel wird er das euch Kleingläubigen thun und beweisen! Derhalben wird aus der Gegeneinanderhaltung der guten Dinge, so die bösen Menschen überflüssig haben, und des Uebels und der Beschwerung, so wir leiden, unser Glaube geübet, und die Vertröstung zu GOtt (die allein heilig ist) bereit, so gar müssen von Noth wegen alle Dinge den Heiligen dienen und mitwirken zu Frommen, Gut und Förderung, Röm. 8, 28.

89. Das andere Gut, das viel

Which is as though he said. Even though I suffer certain things, from which I see that those men are free, nevertheless I trust that God is far more good to me than He is to them. Thus the blessings which we see the wicked enjoy become to us an incentive to hope for those blessings which are not seen, and to despise the evils which we suffer. Even as Christ, in Matthew vi, bids us behold the foul of the air and the lilies of the field, saying, “Wherefore if God so clothe the grass, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?” [Matt. 6:26 ff.] Hence, by this comparison of the blessings in which the wicked abound with the evils that we suffer, our faith is exercised, and our consolation is placed in God alone, which is the only holy consolation. So doth He make all things work together for good unto His saints. [Rom. 8:28]

The other blessing, which is more marvelous, is this, that the evils of our adversaries become blessings to us, under the providence of God. For though their sins are a stumbling-block to the weak, to such as are strong they are an exercise of virtue, and an opportunity for conflict and the amassing of greater merit.[301] For, “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life.” [Jas. 1:12] What greater temptation can there be than a host of evil examples? For this reason, indeed, the world is called one of the enemies of God's saints, because with its allurements and ungodly works it incites, provokes, and entices us from the way of God to its own way. As we read in Genesis vi, “The sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair, and they were made flesh.” [Gen. 6:2,3] And in Numbers xxv, “The

[301] One of the passages Luther did not correct.

Non minus boni nobis mundus confert ex altero malorum suorum latere, quod est adversitas. Nam quos illecebris non potest devorare et scandalis sibi incorporare, passionibus conatur a se expellere et malis poenarum exturbare, semper aut insidias per peccatorum exemplum aut furias per poenarum tormentum intentans. Haec est enim Chymera monstrum, cuius caput virgineum et blandum, venter leoninus et truculentus, cauda serpentina et mortifera, quia finis mundi tam voluptatis quam tyrannidis venenum et mors sempiterna. Sicut ergo in peccatis mundi foecit nos deus bona nostra invenire, ita ut et persecutiones eius non sint frustra et ociosae, ordinantur nobis ad incrementum bonorum nostrorum, ut hoc ipso quo nobis nocent cogantur prodesse, sicut B. Augustinus de parvulis ab Herode necatis dicit: Nunquam potuisset tantum profuisse obsequio, quantum profuit odio. Et B. Agatha gloriabunda ad carcerem tanquam ad epulas ivit, causans in hunc modum: Nisi corpus meum foeceris a carnificibus tuis bene contrectari, non potest anima mea cum palma ad paradysum introire, sicut granum, si non exuta fuerit theca eius et in area fortiter percutiatur, non reponitur in horreum.

Sed quid hic modica loquimur, cum in hanc rem tota scriptura, omnium patrum scripta et dicta, omnium sanctorum facta et gesta videamus consonare, Esse eos utilissimos credentibus qui sunt eis nocentissimi; modo recte ferantur? ut Petrus i. Pe. iij. Et quis est qui vobis noceat, si boni emulatores fueritis [I Pet. 3:13]? ps. lxxxviij. Nihil proficiet inimicus in eo, et filius iniquitatis non apponet nocere ei [Ps. 89:22]. Quomodo non nocet, cum saepius etiam occidat? quia scilicet

wundersamer ist, daß ihre Uebel unsere Güter oder gute Dinge sein durch göttliche Verordnung. Denn wiewohl ihre Sünde den Schwachen Aergerniß sein, so sein sie doch den Stärkern Uebung der Tugend und Ursach des Streits, und eines größern Verdiensts. Denn selig ist der Mann, der die Anfechtung leidet, denn so er versucht wird, so wird er empfangen die Krone des Lebens, Jac. 1, 12. Welche Versuchung oder Anfechtung ist größer, denn die Menge und Anzahl der allerhöchsten Exempel und Vorbilder. Derhalben auch die Welt der Feinde einer der Heiligen GOttes genannt wird, darum, daß die Welt uns durch ihre Wohllust und ungöttliche Werke reizet, beweget und abzeucht von dem Wege GOttes auf ihre Wege, wie denn 1 Mos. am 6, 2. stehet: Die Kinder GOttes haben gesehen die Töchter der Menschen, daß sie schön waren, und sie sein Fleisch worden. Und 4 Mos. am 25., V. 1. ff., stehet: daß die Kinder von Israel mit der Moabiten Kindern zu Fall kommen sein. Also, daß es gut und heilsam ist, daß wir allezeit mit Uebel und Beschwerung angefochten werden, damit wir nicht durch die Aergernisse der Welt beleidigt und schwach werden, fallen und sündigen.

90. Also wird St. Lot von St. Peter in seiner andern Epistel am andern, V. 7., gelobt, daß er von den allerbösten Vorbilden, den Sodomitern, viel Uebels erlitten und in seiner Gerechtigkeit darunter zugenommen hat. Darum ist es vonnöthen, daß diese Aergernisse kommen, die uns den Streit und Sieg zuwege bringen und machen. Aber dennoch „wehe der Welt von wegen der Aergernisse", Matth. 18, 7. Weil nun GOtt in der andern Leute Sünde uns so viel guter Dinge verschafft und verordnet; wie viel mehr

people of Israel began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab." [Num. 25:1] So it is good for us to be always oppressed with some trouble or other, that we may not, in our weakness, stumble at the offences of the world, and fall into sin. Thus Lot is praised by Peter, in II. Peter ii., because he suffered many things because of the evil example of the people of Sodom, so that he made progress thereby in his righteousness. [2 Pet. 2:8] It must needs be that these offences come, which furnish us an occasion for conflict and for victory; but woe unto the world because of offences! [Matt. 18:7] But if God procures us such great blessings in the sins of others, should we not with our whole heart believe that He will work, us much greater blessings in our own troubles; even though our flesh and blood judge it to be otherwise!

Nor does the world confer a smaller blessing on us from another side of its evils; namely, its adversities. For, when it is unable to swallow us up with its allurements, and through its offences to make us one with itself, it endeavors through sufferings to drive us out, and through pains to cast us forth; always laying snares for us by the example of its sins, or else visiting its fury upon us through the torment of its pains. This is indeed that fabled monster, Chimaera,[302] with the head of a maiden, seductive, the body of a lion, cruel, and the tail of a serpent, deadly. For the end of the world, both of its pleasures and its tyranny, is poison and death everlasting. Hence, even as God grants us to find our blessings in the sins of the world, so also its persecutions, that they may not remain fruitless and in vain, are appointed unto us to increase our blessings; so that the very things

[302] Here Luther unites the mythological figures of chimaera (*The Iliad*, 6, 179) and siren (*The Odyssey*, 12, 39). Scholars are undecided on whether this combination is intentional or not.

nocendo maxime prodest. Ita videmus undique nos in mediis bonis habitare, si prudentes sumus, simul tamen in mediis malis: adeo omnia sunt mire temperata divinae bonitatis magisterio.

müssen wir mit ganzem Herzen glauben, daß er in unserm eigenen Uebel und Beschwerung uns etwas Gutes wirken wird, wiewohl die Sinnlichkeit und das Fleisch es dafür nicht halten. Die Welt gibt uns nicht weniger Gutes von der andern Seite ihrer Uebel, welches die Widerwärtigkeit ist. Denn die sie mit ihrer Lust nicht mag verschlingen und ihr mit dem Aergerniß einleiben, dieselben unterstehet sie sich durch Leiden und Beschwerung von ihr zu treiben und durch die Uebel und Pein zu verjagen, und übet allezeit entweder Betrug und Arglistigkeit durch das Vorbild der Sünder, oder Grausamkeit durch die Marter der Pein. Denn das ist das wunderliche widernatürliche Ding Chimära, das ein liebliches Jungfrauhaupt, eines Löwen grausamen Bauch und einer giftigen Schlange Schwanz hat. Denn das Ende der Welt, mit der Lust und wunderlichen und tyrannischen Regiment, ist Gift und der ewige Tod.

91. Derhalben, wie GOtt verordnet hat, in den Sünden der Welt unsere Güter wiederzufinden; also, daß auch die Verfolgungen der Welt nicht vergeblich sein, sondern uns zu Aufnehmung unserer Güter verordnet werden; also, daß sie auch in dem, daß sie unterwinden uns zu schaden, uns

that work us harm are turned to our profit. As St. Augustine says, concerning the innocents slain by Herod, "Never could he have done them so much good with his favor as he did with his hatred."[303] And St. Agatha,[304] the blessed martyr, went to prison as to a banquet chamber; "for," said she, "except thou cause my body to be well broken by thy executioners, my soul will not be able to enter paradise, bearing the victor's palm; even as a grain of wheat, except it be stript of its husk, and well beaten on the threshing-floor, is not gathered into the barn."

But why waste words here, when we see the whole of the Scriptures, the writings and sayings of all the Fathers, and the lives and acts of all the saints, agreeing together in this matter; namely, that they who bring the most harm upon believers are their greatest benefactors, if only we bear with them in the right spirit. As St. Peter says, "And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?" [1 Pet. 3:13] And Psalm lxxxviii, "The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him." [Ps. 89:22] How is it that he shall not harm us, seeing that oftentimes he even kills us? Because, forsooth, in harming us he is working us the very greatest gain.

[303] Some suggest, following the lead of AE, that the reference here is to Augustine's *Harmony on the Gospels*, 6.

[304] St. Agatha (c. A.D. 231 – 251) is known from the *Legenda Aurea,* ch. 24, among other sources (*Legenda Aurea*, Theodor Graesse, ed., Leipzig: Libraria Arnoldiana, 1850, p. 113) Luther, as pointed out by Phetsanghane, knew of the *Legenda Aurea* per a letter from him to Spalatin dated Aug. 24, 1518: "I am offended by the bewildering manner of those stupidities and lies of the *Catalog* [*of the* Saints] and *Golden Legend*." (WA Br. 1, 50)

Agatha's festival is held on February 5th, which date was documented as early as the fifth or sixth century in the *Martyrologium Carthaginiense* (*The Catholic Encyclopedia*, J. P. Kirsh, New York: Appleton Co., 1907, "St. Agatha")

Gregory I (c. 540 – March 12, 604), in a letter to Leo the Acolyte, mentions how the church of St. Agatha recovered from the ruling Arian Goths, in his time did not refrain from congregating any one year, and restored their church roof and windows among other furnishings. In his *Dialogues*, 3, ch. 30 he comments on the establishment of the church and supernatural events that the building underwent (see *Gregory the Great, Dialogues* London: Philip Warner, 1911. At: tertullian.org). It is likely *The Dialogues* that reminded Luther of St. Agatha (cf. Part II, ch. 4).

Her legend is that she, a "daughter of a distinguished family and remarkable for her beauty of person, was persecuted by the Senator Quintianus with avowals of love. As his proposals were resolutely spurned by the pious Christian virgin, he committed her to the charge of an evil woman, whose seductive arts, however, were baffled by Agatha's unswerving firmness in the Christian faith. Quintianus then had her subjected to various cruel tortures. Especially inhuman seemed his order to have her breasts cut off, a detail which furnished to the Christian medieval iconography the peculiar characteristic of Agatha. But the holy virgin was consoled by a vision of St. Peter, who miraculously healed her. Eventually she succumbed to the repeated cruelties practised on her." (*Cath. En.*) It is thought that Agatha was martyred under Decius (250 – 253).

müssen dienen und Frommen schaffen. Wie denn St. Augustinus von den unschuldigen Kindern, die der Herodes umgebracht hat, sagt: Er hätte ihnen nimmermehr so viel mögen Gutes erzeigen mit Willfahrung, als er gethan hat durch den Haß und Widerwillen. St. Agatha ist auch mit Freuden in das Gefängniß gangen und hat zum Amtmann gesagt: Es sei denn, daß du verschaffest, daß mein Leichnam von deinen Henkern wohl begriffen und gehandelt werde, so mag meine Seele in das Paradies nicht gehen. Eben wie ein Körnlein, wenn es aus seinem Häutlein nicht kommt und hart genug im Stadel gedroschen wird, so wird es auf den Boden nicht geschüttet.

92. Aber was rede ich allhier von geringen Dingen? Denn wir sehen, daß die ganze heilige Schrift, aller heiligen Väter Bücher und Reden und aller Heiligen Thaten, Sachen und Werke damit übereinkommen, daß sie den Christgläubigen am allernützten sein, die ihnen am allerschädlichsten sein. Wenn man sie allein recht erleidet; als St. Peter in der ersten Epistel am 3. Cap., V. 13., sagt: „Wer ist doch der, so euch schadet, wenn ihr gute Nachfolger seid?“ Und im 89. Psalm, V. 23.: „Der Feind wird in ihm nichts zuwege bringen, und der Sohn der Ungerechtigkeit wird sich nicht unterwinden ihm zu schaden.“ Wie kommt es, daß er nicht schadet, so er doch oft ertödtet und ermordet? Daher kommt es, daß sie in dem, daß sie schaden, uns am allermeisten nutzen und frommen. Also sehen wir, daß wir allenthalben und überall mitten in guten Dingen wohnen, wenn wir weise und vorsichtig sein, und dennoch zugleich auch mitten unter den Uebeln. Also wunderlich sein durch die Meisterschaft der göttlichen Güte alle Dinge temperirt, gemäßiget und vermengt.

[Rom. 8:36] Thus we find ourselves every way dwelling in the midst of blessings, if we are wise, and yet, at the same time, also in the midst of evils. So wondrously are all things tempered together under the rule of the goodness of God.

CAPUT SEXTUM
de spectro sexto,

quod est bonum dextrum seu ad dextram.

Haec est Ecclesia sanctorum, nova creatura dei, fratres et amici nostri, in quibus nihil nisi bonum videmus, non nisi consolationem, non semper quidem oculis carneis (nam sic in contrario spectro sunt malorum) sed oculis spiritualibus. Quanquam et illa eorum bona, quae videntur, non reiicienda sunt, quin in his nos consolari a deo intelligamus. Nam et ps. lxxij. non fuit ausus damnare omnes, qui in saeculo obtinerent divitias, dicens: Si dicebam sic 'ecce nationem filiorum tuorum reprobavi' [Ps. 73:15], id est, si volui dicere esse omnes malos, qui divites, sani honoratique essent, iam etiam sanctos tuos damnassem, quorum multi in his sunt. Sed et Apostolus Timotheum docet, ut praecipiat divitibus huius saeculi non superbe sapere [I Tim. 6:17], divites esse non prohibens. Et Abraham, Isaac et Iacob divites scriptura refert fuisse [Gen. 13:2; 26:12-13; 32:10]. Atque Daniel cum sotiis suis honorati etiam in Babylone fuerunt [Dan. 2:48 f.]: praeterea multi reges Iuda sancti fuerunt. Hos itaque intuitus ps. dicit: Si dicebam sic 'nationem filiorum tuorum reprobavi' [Ps. 73:15]. Dat, inquam, deus etiam suis horum bonorum copiam ad solatium eorum et aliorum: verum non haec eorum propria, immo haec umbra et signa sunt verorum bonorum, quae sunt fides, spes, charitas, aliaeque gratiae et dona, quae omnia communia fiunt per charitatem.

Haec est communio sanctorum, in qua gloriamur. Et quis non hic superbiat, etiam in magnis malis, qui credat id quod res est, Esse scilicet omnium

Der sechste Unterscheid,

von dem Gut auf der rechten Hand.

93. Das ist die Kirche und Versammlung der Heiligen, die neue Creatur GOttes, unsere Brüder und Freunde, in welchen wir nichts anders denn Gut und Trost sehen, wiewohl nicht allezeit mit den leiblichen Augen, denn so sein sie in dem Gegenbild der bösen Dinge, sondern mit den geistlichen Augen, wiewohl auch dieselben ihre Güter, so gesehen werden, nicht sollen von uns verachtet und verworfen werden, sondern es dafür halten, daß uns GOtt damit tröstet. Denn der 73. Psalm, V. 15., hat nicht dürfen verdammen alle die, so Reichthum in der Welt hätten, und sagt also: „Wenn ich also sagte: Nimm wahr, ich habe die Nation deiner Kinder verworfen", das ist, so ich habe wollen sagen, daß alle die böse wären, die reich, gesund und geehret oder ehrenwürdig sein, so hätte ich auch deine Heiligen verdammt oder verworfen, deren viele reich, gesund und hochgeehrt gewesen sein.

94. Auch lehrt Sanct Paulus Timotheum, 1 Tim. 6, 17., daß er soll „den Reichen dieser Welt gebieten, nicht stolzer und hoffärtiger Weisheit zu sein"; hat ihnen aber nicht verboten, reich zu sein. Auch zeigt die heilige Schrift an, daß Abraham, 1 Mos. 13, 1., Isaak, 26, 12. ff., und Jakob, 32, 10., sein reich gewesen; so ist Daniel mit sammt seinen Gesellen zu Babylonien in großen Ehren gewesen, Dan. 2, 48. ff. Auch sein viel Könige zu Juda heilig gewesen. Derhalben hat berührter Psalm ein Auge auf dieselben gehabt und gesagt: „Wenn ich gesprochen habe, ich habe die Nation oder

CHAPTER VI

The Sixth Image

The Blessing on Our Right Hand

This is the Church of the saints, the new creation of God, our brethren and our friends, in whom we see naught but blessing, naught but consolation; not, indeed, always with the eyes of the flesh (to which they would appear to belong rather under the corresponding image of evils), but with the eyes of the spirit Nevertheless, we must not disregard even those blessings of theirs which may be seen, but rather learn from them how God would comfort us. For even the Psalmist did not venture, in Psalm lxxii, to condemn all those who amass riches in this world, but said, "If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend against the generation of Thy children." [Ps. 73:15] That is to say, If I should call all men wicked who possess riches, health, and honor, I should be condemning even Thy saints, of whom there are many such. Paul also instructs Timothy to charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded; [1 Tim. 6:17] but he does not forbid them to be rich. And Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were rich men, as the Scriptures record [Gen. 13:2; 26:12-13; 32:10]. Daniel, also, and his companions were raised to honor even in Babylon. [Dan. 2:48 f.] Moreover many of the kings of Judah were saintly men. It is with regard to such persons that the Psalmist says, "If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend against the generation of Thy children." [Ps. 73:15] God gives, even to His people, an abundance of these blessings, for their own comfort, and the comfort of others. Still, these things are not their proper

sanctorum bona sua bona, suum malum esse illorum quoque? Hoc enim spectrum dulcissimum et iucundissimum est, quod Apostolus ad Galatas hoc verbo pingit: Alter alterius onera portate, et sic implebitis legem Christi [Gal. 6:2]. Nonne bonum est, nos hic esse, ubi, si unum membrum (ut i. Cor. vi. dicit) patitur, compatiuntur et omnia membra, si unum glorificatur, congaudent omnia membra [I Cor. 12:26]? Itaque dum ego patior, patior iam non solus, patitur mecum Christus et omes Christiani, sicut dicit: Qui tangit vos, tangit pupillam oculi mei [Zach. 2:8]. Ita onus meum portant alii, illorum virtus mea est. Fides Ecclesiae meae trepidationi succurrit, castitas aliorum meae libidinis tentationem suffert, aliorum ieiunia mea lucra sunt, alterius oratio pro me sollicita est, et breviter, ita invicem sollicita sunt membra, ut honestiora etiam inhonesta tegant, servent, honorent [I Cor. 12:26], sicut i. Cor. vi. pulchre describit. Atque ita vere gloriari possum in aliorum bonis tanquam meis propriis, Atque tunc vere et mea sunt, si gratulor et congaudeo eis. Sim ergo turpis et foedus: at illi, quos amo, quibus applaudo, formosi decorique sunt. Quo amore mihi non solum eorum bona, sed eosipsos facio meos: quare sub horum gloria facile mea honorabitur ignominia, eorum abundantia mea implebitur inopia, eorum merita meis medebuntur peccatis. Quis ergo queat desperare in peccatis? quis non gaudeat in penis, qui sua peccata et penas iam neque portat aut si portat non solus portat, adiutus tot sanctis filiis dei, ipso denique Christo? Tanta res est communio sanctorum et Ecclesia Christi.

Quod siquis haec non fieri aut geri credat, hic infidelis est, Christum et Ecclesiam negavit. Nam etsi non

das Geschlecht deiner Kinder verworfen.“ Denn GOtt gibt auch den Seinen die Menge dieser zeitlichen Güter zu ihrem und anderer Leute Trost. Aber das sein nicht ihre eigenen Güter, ja, es sein allein ein Schatten und Zeichen der wahrhaftigen Güter, welche denn sein der Glaube, Hoffnung, Liebe und andere Gnaden und Gaben GOttes, welche durch die christliche Liebe alle gemeint werden, und keines Menschen mehr denn des andern. Und das ist die Gemeinschaft der Heiligen, in der wir uns rühmen. Wer sollte sich nun auch in großen Uebeln und Widerwärtigkeiten nicht erheben, wer anders glaubt, wie es an der That ist, daß ihre Güter aller Heiligen Güter und Gaben und Gnaden sein? Und desgleichen, daß ihr Uebel und Beschwerung aller Heiligen Uebel und Beschwerung sein.

95. Denn dies Bildniß ist das allerlieblichste, allersüßeste und allerholdseligste Bildniß, welches St. Paulus zu den Galatern, Cap. 9, 2., mit diesen Worten ausstreicht und anzeigt: „Einer soll des andern Bürden tragen, also werdet ihr das Gesetz Christi erfüllen.“ Sollte es nicht gut sein, daß wir an dem Ort sein, da, wenn ein Glied, als St. Paulus zu den Corinthern, 1. Ep. 12, 26., saget, leidet, die andern Glieder alle Mitleiden tragen, wenn eines geehret wird, die anderen alle sich mit ihm erfreuen?

96. Derhalben, wenn ich leide, so leide ich nicht allein, denn es leidet mit mir Christus, mein HErr und Seligmacher, und alle Christen. Wie denn der HErr selbst sagt. Zach. 2, 8.: „Wer euch angreift, der tastet an den Apfel meines Auges.“ Also tragen die andern meine Bürde: derselben Stärke ist meine Stärke. Der Glaube der Christenheit kommt zu Hülfe meiner Blödigkeit; der andern Keuschheit erhält

blessings, but only shadows and emblems of their true blessings, which consist in faith, hope, love, and other gifts and graces, which love communicates to all.

This is the communion of saints, in which we glory. And whose heart will not be lifted up, even in the midst of great evils, when he believes that which is indeed the very truth; namely, that the blessings of all the saints are his blessings, and that his evil is also theirs! For this is the sweet and pleasant picture which the Apostle Paul depicts, in Galatians vi, “Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.” [Gal. 6:2] Is it not a blessing to be in such a company in which, “whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it”? as it is said in I. Corinthians vi [1 Cor. 12:26][305]. Therefore, when I suffer, I suffer not alone, but Christ and all Christians suffer with me; as He saith, “He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of My eye.” [Zach. 2:8] Even so others bear my burden, and their strength becomes my own. The Church's faith supports my fearfulness, the chastity of others bears the temptations of my flesh, the fastings of others are my gain, the prayer of another pleads for me. In short, such care have the members one for another, that the comely parts cover, serve, and honor the uncomely; as it is beautifully set forth in I. Corinthians vi. others as though they were my own; and they are truly my own when I find joy and pleasure therein. Let me, then, be base and vile; yet they whom I love and admire are fair and beautiful. And by my love I make not only their blessings, but their very selves my own; so that by their honor my shame is made honorable, by their abundance my poverty is

[305] PE: Luther has mistaken the chapter.

sentiatur, vere tamen ita agitur, immo quis non sentiat? Nam quod non desperas, quod non impatiens efficeris, quis in causa est? Tua virtus? nequaquam, sed communio sanctorum. Alioquin nec veniale peccatum ferres, nec verbum hominis contra te sustineres: adeo prope est Christus et Ecclesia. Hoc est quod dicimus 'Credo in spiritum sanctum, sanctam Ecclesiam catholicam'. Quid est credere Ecclesiam sanctam quam sanctorum communionem? Quo communicant autem sancti? nempe bonis et malis: omnia sunt omnium, sicut figurat sacramentum altaris in pane et vino, ubi unum corpus, unus panis, unus potus ab Apostolo dicimur [I Cor. 10:17]. Quis enim offendit particulam corporis, in quo non totum corpus offendat? Quid patitur extremulus pedis polliculus, quod non patitur totum corpus? quod beneficium confertur vel pedibus, in quo non gaudeat corpus totum? At nos unum corpus sumus. Quicquid alius patitur, ego patior et fero: quicquid bene fit ei, mihi fit [Matth. 25:40]. Ita Christus dicit sibi factum, quod suis minimis factum fuerit. Quis panem altaris quantumlibet particula accipiens non dicitur panem accepisse? Quis particulam eius contemnens non panem contempsisse dicitur?

Quare si dolemus, si patimur, si morimur, huc feratur intutus, et fortiter credamus ac certi simus, quod non nos aut non soli sed Christus et Ecclesia nobiscum dolet, patitur, moritur. und trägt meine Unreinigkeit; der andern Fasten sein mein Gewinn; der andern Gebet ist für mich sorgfältig. Und endlich haben die Glieder solche Sorgfältigkeit eines für das andere, daß auch die unehrlichen Glieder von den ehrlichen gedeckt, verwahret und geehret werden. Wie denn St. Paulus in der ersten Epistel zu den von Corinth, am 12., V. 22. 23., fein und wohl beschreibt. Also kann ich mich mit Wahrheit fremder Güter und Tugend berühmen als meiner eigenen Güter, und sein wahrlich sodann mein eigen, wenn ich deß ein Frohlocken mit ihnen habe.

97. Wenn ich nun gleich ungestalt, unrein und unsauber bin, so sein doch die, so ich liebe und mit denen ich mich erfreue, schön, fein und hübsch. Durch welche Liebe ich mir nicht allein ihre Güter mein eigen, sondern auch sie selbst mein eigen mache. Derhalben unter ihre Ehre meine Schande und Unehre wird leichtlich geehrt werden, durch ihr Reichthum wird meine Armuth und Dürftigkeit erfüllt werden, und ihre Verdienste werden meine Seele heilen. Darum, wer kann in den Sünden verzweifeln und verzagen? Wer sollte sich nicht in den Peinen erfreuen, so er seine Sünde und Pein nicht mehr trägt. Oder aber, so er sie trägt, so trägt er sie alleine nicht, sondern mit Hülfe so vieler heiligen Kinder GOttes, ja, unsers lieben HErrn und Seligmachers selbst. Ein so groß Ding ist es um die Gemeinschaft der Heiligen und um die Kirche

filled, by their merits my sins are healed. Who, then, could despair in his sins? Who would not rejoice in his pains? For it is not he that bears his sins and pains; or if he does bear them, he bears them not alone, but is assisted by so many holy sons of God, yea, even by Christ Himself. So great a thing is the communion of saints, and the Church of Christ.[306]

If any one does not believe this, he is an infidel, and has denied Christ and the Church. For even if it should not be perceived yet it is true; but who could fail to perceive it? For why is it that you do not sink in despair, or grow impatient? Is it your strength? Nay: it is the communion of saints. Otherwise you could not bear even a venial sin,[307] nor endure a word of man against you. So close to you are Christ and the Church. It is this that we confess in the Creed, "I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Catholic[308] Church." What is it to believe in the holy Church but to believe in the communion of saints. But what things have the saints in common? Blessings, forsooth, and evils; all things belong to all; as the Sacrament of the Altar signifies, in the bread and wine, where we are all said by the Apostle to be one body, one bread, one cup.[309] [1 Cor. 10:17] For who can hurt any part of the body without hurting the whole body? What pain can we feel in the tip of the toe that is not felt in the whole body? Or what honor can be shown to the feet in which the whole body will not

[306] PE: For the various interpretations of the "communion of the saints" among mediæval theologians, See Reinh. Seeberg, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, 1st ed., vol. ii, p.127, note. Luther in the *Sermon von dem hochwürdigen Sacrament des heiligen wahren Leichnams Christi* (1519), still accepts the phrase as meaning the participation in the Sacrament, and through it the participation in "the spiritual possessions of Christ and His saints." In our treatise, it is taken as the definition of "the holy Catholic Church," in the sense of a communion with the saints. In *The Papacy at Rome* (later in the same year), it becomes the communion or community (consisting of saints, or believers; as a *Gemeinde oder Sammlung*. Compare the classical passage in the *Large Catechism* (1529): "nicht *Gemenschaft*, sondern *Gemeine*."

[307] Cf. Luther's *A Discussion of Confession*: "When men have heard that a certain sin is venial, they are careless and wholly leave off fearing God, as if He counted a venial sin for naught…[A]fter a man has used all diligence in confessing, he has yet confessed only the smaller part of his sins. How do we know this? Because the Scripture says, 'Cleanse Thou me from hidden sins, O Lord.' [Ps. 19:12] (PE 1, 88)

[308] PE: Changed to "Christian" in the Catechisms (1529), although the Latin translations retain *catholocism*.

[309] PE: The Apostle does not say, "one cup."

Adeo scilicet nobis Christus noluit mortis viam esse solitariam, quam omnis homo horret, sed comite tota Ecclesia viam passionis et mortis ingredimur, et fortius Ecclesia tolerat quam nosipsi, ut vere possimus illud Helisei iiij. Reg. vi. nobis aptare, quod ad servum suum timidum dixit: Noli timere, plures nobiscum sunt quam cum illis, Cumque orasset Heliseus, ait: Domine, aperi oculos pueri huius, ut videat, et aperuit dominus oculos pueri, et vidit, Et ecce mons plenus equorum et curruum igneorum in circuitu Helisei [II Reg. 6:16 f.]. Hoc solum et nobis restat, ut oremus, quo nobis aperiantur oculi et videamus Ecclesiam in circuitu nostro, fidei inquam oculi: tunc nihil est quod timebimus, sicut et ps. cxxiiij. Montes in circuitu eius et dominus in circuitu populi sui ex hoc nunc et usque in saeculum [Ps. 125:2], Amen.

Christi.

98. Und wer es nicht dafür hält und achtet, daß das alles also geschehe und ergehe, derselbe ist ungläubig und hat den HErrn Christum und die heilige christliche Kirche verleugnet. Denn wiewohl man das nicht empfindet, so geschieht es doch in der Wahrheit also. Ja, wer wollte es nicht empfinden? Denn, daß du nicht verzweifelst, daß du nicht ungeduldig wirst, wer ist deß eine Ursache? Deine Stärke und Vermögen? O, in keinem Weg, sondern die Gemeinschaft der Heiligen ist deß eine Ursache. Sonst möchtest du auch eine tägliche Sünde nicht erleiden, noch ein einiges Wort eines Menschen, wider dich geredet, verdulden.

99. So gar nahe ist der HErr Christus und die christliche Kirche oder Versammlung. Und das ist das, so wir sprechen: „Ich glaube an den Heiligen Geist, die heilige christliche Kirche.“ Denn was ist, glauben die heilige christliche Kirche, anders, denn glauben die Gemeinschaft der Heiligen? Womit haben denn die Heiligen eine Gemeinschaft oder Gesellschaft? In den guten und bösen Dingen. Denn alle Dinge sein ihr aller, das ist, wenn es ihr einem wohl gehet, so gehet es ihnen allen wohl, wenn es ihr einem übel gehet, so gehet es ihnen allen übel. Wie denn solches durch das Sacrament des Altars oder durch die Messe angezeigt und bedeutet wird im Brod und Wein. In welchem Amt wir von St. Paulus werden ein einiger Leib, ein einiges Brod und ein einiger Trank genannt, 1 Cor. 10, 17. Denn wer beleidigt ein Stücklein des Leichnams, der damit nicht den ganzen Leichnam beleidigt? Was leidet die kleinste Zehe des Fußes, das nicht der ganze Leichnam leidet? Was begegnet für eine Wohlthat den Füßen, deß sich nicht der ganze

rejoice? But we are one body. Whatever another suffers, that I suffer and bear; whatever good befalls him, befalls me. So Christ says that whatsoever is done unto one of the least of His brethren, is done unto Him [Matt. 25:40]. If a man partake of the smallest fragment of the bread of the altar, is he not said to have partaken of the bread? If he despise one crumb of it, is he not said to have despised the bread?

When we, therefore, feel pain, when we suffer, when we die, let us turn hither our eyes,[310] and firmly believe and be sure that it is not we, or we alone, but that Christ and the Church are in pain, are suffering, are dying with us. For Christ would not have us go alone into the valley of death, from which all men shrink in fear; but we set out upon the way of pain and death attended by the whole Church, and the Church bears the brunt of it all. Therefore, we can with truth apply to ourselves the words of Elisha, which he spake to his timid servant, “Fear not: for they that be with us a remote than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.” [2 Kings 6:16 f.] This one thing remains for us also; namely, to pray that our eyes may be opened (I mean the eyes of our faith), that we may see the Church round about us. Then there will be nothing for us to fear; as it is said also in Psalm cxxiv, “Mountains are round about it: so the Lord is round about His people from henceforth now and for ever.” [Ps. 125:2][311]

[310] PE: The translation here follows the reading of the *Jena Ed. (huc feratur intuitus)*, as against that of the *Weimar* and *Erl. Edd. (huc foratur intutus)*.

[311] PE: Thus the Vulgate.

Leichnam erfreuet? Nun sein wir je ein einiger Leichnam. Derhalben was ein anderer leidet, das leide auch ich, und alles, was einem andern zu gute geschieht, das geschieht auch mir zu gute.

100. Also sagt der HErr Christus, Matth. 25, 40., daß man's ihm gethan hat, was man seinen wenigsten erzeigt hat. Von welchem, der ein Stück des hochwürdigen Sacraments empfangen hat, wird nicht gesagt, daß er das ganze Sacrament empfangen habe? Von welchem, der ein kleines Stücklein des Sacraments verachtet, wird nicht gesagt, daß er habe das ganze Sacrament verachtet? Darum so es uns übel geht, so wir Leid und Schmerzen haben, so wir etwas leiden, und so wir sterben; so sollen wir hierher sehen und festiglich glauben und deß gewiß sein, daß nicht wir, oder je wir nicht allein, sondern der HErr Christus und die ganze christliche Kirche mit sammt uns leidet, Schmerzen, Beschwerung und Widerwärtigkeit hat und stirbt.

101. So gar hat unser lieber HErr und Seligmacher Christus gewollt uns den Weg des Todes nicht einsam sein, davor sich alle Menschen fürchten und entsetzen; sondern wir wandern den Weg des Leidens und des Todes mit sammt der ganzen christlichen Kirche. Ja, die christliche Kirche oder Versammlung leidet, trägt und hat dieselbe Beschwerung mehr und heftiger, denn wir selbst. Also, daß wir uns diesen Spruch des heiligen Helisä im andern Buch der Könige am sechsten mit Wahrheit mögen ermessen, welchen er zu seinem furchtsamen, blöden und erschrockenen Knecht sagt: „Du sollst dich nicht fürchten, denn ihr sein mehr mit und bei uns, denn bei ihnen. Und als der heilige Elisa gebetet hat: O HErr, eröffne die Augen dieses Kindes und laß es sehen. Also hat der HErr geöffnet die Augen des Kindes und hat gesehen. Und nimm wahr, allda ist

CAPUT SEPTIMUM
de spectro septimo,

quod est bonum supernum seu super nos.

Nihil de aeternis et coelestibus bonis loquor, quibus beati fruuntur in visione clara dei, aut saltem de eis in fide loquor, et qua ratione nobis possunt esse comprehensibilia. Ita hoc septimum spectrum est Ihesus Christus rex gloriae, resurgens ex mortuis, sicut idem fuit septimum spectrum malorum passus, moriens et sepultus. Hic videre licet summum cordis nostri gaudium et stabilia bona, nihil hic prorsus malorum, quia Christus resurgens ex mortuis iam non moritur, mors illi ultra non dominabitur [Rom. 6:9]. Hic est caminus charitatis et ignis dei in Zion, ut Isaias dicit [Isa. 31:9]: Christus enim natus est nobis, non solum autem, sed et datus est nobis [Isa. 9:6]. Quare resurrectio eius mea est et omnia quae per resurrectionem suam operatus est, Et, ut Apostolus Ro. viij. exuberantissime gloriatur, quomodo non omnia nobis donavit cum illo [Rom. 8:32]? Quid autem operatus est resurgendo? nempe peccatum destruxit, iustitiam suscitavit, mortem absumpsit et vitam reddidit, infernum

Der siebente Unterscheid,

von dem obern Gut.

102. Allhier rede ich nichts von den ewigen und himmlischen Gütern, derer die Heiligen und Seligen genießen in dem klaren Anblick und Anschauen GOttes; oder auf's wenigste rede ich von denselbigen ewigen und himmlischen Gütern im Glauben und durch welche Weise sie mögen von uns begriffen werden. Derhalben ist das siebente Bildniß der guten Dinge unser HErr JEsus Christus, der König der Glorien und Ehren, wie er von den Todten auferstanden ist. Eben wie das siebente Bildniß der bösen Dinge oder der Uebel ist gewesen Christus, unser lieber HErr und Seligmacher, in der Gestalt, wie er gelitten hat, gestorben und begraben ist.

103. Und allhier mögen und können wir sehen die allerhöchste Freude unsers Herzens und die beständigen Güter, und gar kein Uebel noch böses Ding. Denn unser HErr und Seligmacher, „Christus JEsus, der von den Todten ersteht, stirbt jetzt nicht. Und der Tod wird nicht mehr über ihn herrschen", Röm. 6, 9. Das ist der gewesen ein Berg voller Pferde und feuriger Wagen in dem Umkreis oder gerings um den Elisa." Darum ist allein dies für uns hinterstellig, daß wir GOtt bitten, uns unsere Augen zu öffnen, daß wir mögen sehen die heilige christliche Kirche in unserm Umkreis mit dem Auge des heiligen Glaubens. Sodann wird nichts sein, dafür wir uns fürchten und scheuen; wie denn im 125. Psalm, V. 2., steht: „Die Berge in seinem Umkreis, und der HErr in dem Umkreis seines Volks von diesen und zu ewigen Zeiten", Amen.

CHAPTER VII

The Seventh Image

The Supernal Blessing or the Blessing Above Us

I do not now speak of the eternal blessings of Heaven, which the blessed enjoy in the perfect vision of God; or father, I do speak of them in faith, and in so far as they some within our comprehension. For this seventh image is Jesus Christ, the King of glory, rising from the dead; even as, in His Passion and death. He formed the seventh image of evils. Here it is permitted for our heart to see the summit of joy and steadfast blessings.[312]Here there is nothing at all of evil; for "Christ, being risen from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him." [Rom. 6:9] Here is that furnace of love and fire of God in Zion; [Isa. 31:9] as Isaiah saith. For Christ is not only born unto us, but He is also given unto us. [Isa. 9:6] Therefore, His resurrection, and all that He wrought by it, are mine, and, as the Apostle exults in exuberant joy, "how hath[313] He not also, with Him, given us all things? [Rom. 8:32]" But what is it that He hath wrought by His resurrection? Why, He hath destroyed sin and brought righteousness to light,

[312] This sentence is omitted in PE.

[313] PE: Vulgate.

vicit et gloriam sempiternam contulit. Haec sunt inaestimabilia, ita ut mens hominis vix audeat ea credere sibi donata esse, velut Iacob Gen. xlv. cum audiret filium suum Ioseph regnare in Aegypto, quasi de gravi somno evigilans, non credebat eis, donec, illis repetentibus omnia, plaustra quoque ostenderent missa a Ioseph [Gen. 45:26 ff.]. Ita vere difficile est credere tanta bona nobis indignis in Christo collata, nisi multis verbis ac ut multis apparitionibus sese discipulis manifestavit [Acts 1:3], ita nos tandem, velut plaustris, usu et experientia doceat ita credere. Plaustrum sane est suavissimum, quod factus est nobis iustitia, sanctificatio, redemptio, sapientia a deo, ut i. Cor. i. Apostolus dicit [I Cor. 1:30]. Ego enim peccator sum, sed vehor in eius iustitia, quae mihi data est: immundus sum, sed sanctificatio mea est sua sanctitas, in qua suaviter vehor: stultus ego sum, sed sapientia eius vehit me: damnabilis sum, sed libertas eius redemptio mea est, plaustrum securissimum, Ita ut Christianus (modo id credat) de meritis Christi et omnibus eius bonis non aliter queat gloriari quam si ipsemet ea fecisset: adeo sunt eius propria, ita ut iam securus etiam dei iudicium expectare audeat, quod tamen insustentabile est. Tanta res est fides, tanta bona nobis parit, tam gloriosos dei filios constituit. Neque enim filii esse possumus, nisi paterna bona haereditemus. Dicat ergo Christianus cum fiducia: Ubi est, mors, victoria tua? ubi est, mors, stimulus tuus, id est peccatum? Stimulus enim mortis peccatum est, virtus autem peccati lex: deo autem gratia, qui dedit nobis victoriam per Ihesum Christum, dominum nostrum [1 Cor. 15:55 ff.]! Hoc est, lex facit nos peccatores, peccatum facit nos reos mortis. Quis haec duo vicit? Nostra iustitia? nostra vita? non, sed

Kamin oder Schornstein der Liebe und das Feuer GOttes in Zion, wie der heilige Prophet Jesaias, Cap. 31, 9., sagt. Denn der HErr Christus ist uns nicht allein geboren worden, sondern „ist uns auch gegeben“, Jes. 9, 6. Derhalben sein Erständniß mein Erständniß ist, und alles, das er durch sein Erständniß gewirkt hat, ist mein; wie sich denn St. Paulus zu den Römern am 8., V. 32., auf's allerüberflüssigste berühmt: „Wie sollte er uns denn nicht alle Dinge mit ihm gegeben und geschenkt haben?“ Was hat nun Christus, unser HErr, gewirkt mit seiner Auferstehung? Er hat die Sünde zerstört, er hat die Gerechtigkeit erweckt, er hat den Tod verzehret und das Leben wiederum gegeben, er hat damit die Hölle überwunden, und uns die ewige Glorie und Ehre gegeben.

104. Das sein unermessene und unschätzliche Güter, also daß des Menschen Gemüth es kaum darf glauben, daß ihm so große Güter gegeben sein. Und eben wie Jakob, da er hörete, daß sein Sohn Joseph in Egypten regierte, gleich als erwachte er von einem schweren Schlafe, glaubet er ihm nicht, bis er ihm die Sache nach der Weite anzeigte und die Wagen, von seinem Sohn Joseph zugeschickt, weisete, 1 Mos. 45, 26. ff. Also auch, wahrlich, ist es schwer zu glauben, daß uns Unwürdigen in dem HErrn Christo so große Güter gegeben sein, er hätte denn mit viel Worten und gleichsam mit viel Erscheinungen sich gegen seinen Jüngern eröffnet und uns endlich gleich als mit Anzeigung der Wagen und durch die Erfahrung uns gelehret, solches also zu glauben.

105. Und wahrlich, es ist ein wunderlieblicher, offener Wagen, daß der HErr Christus in uns ist die Gerechtigkeit, die Heiligmachung, die Erlösung und die Weisheit von GOtt worden,

abolished death and restored life, conquered hell and bestowed on us everlasting glory. These are such inestimably precious blessings that the mind of man dare scarce believe that they have become ours; as it was with Jacob, in Genesis xlv, who, when he heard that his son Joseph was ruler in Egypt, was like one awakened out of deep slumber, and believed them not, until, after telling him all the words of Joseph, they showed him the wagons that Joseph had sent. [Gen. 45:26 ff.] So difficult, indeed, would it be for us to believe that in Christ such great blessings have been conferred on us unworthy creatures, did He not teach us to believe it, with many words, and by the evidence of our own experience; even as He manifested Himself to His disciples [314] in divers appearances. [Acts 1:3] Such are our “Joseph's wagons.” This is indeed a most godly “wagon,” that He is made unto us of God righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, and wisdom; [1 Cor. 1:30] as the Apostle saith in I. Corinthians i. For, I am a sinner; yet am I drawn in His righteousness, which is given me. I am unclean; but His holiness is my sanctification, in which I pleasurably tide. I am an ignorant fool; but His wisdom carries me forward. I have deserved condemnation; but I am set free by His redemption, a wagon in which I sit secure. So that a Christian, if he but believe it, may boast of the merits of Christ and all His blessings, even as if he had won them all himself. So truly are they his own, that he may even dare to look boldly forward to the judgment of God, unbearable though it be. So great a thing is faith, such blessings does it bring us, such glorious sons of God does it make us. For we cannot be sons without inheriting our Father's goods. Let the Christian say, then,

[314] PE: Namely, after His resurrection.

Ihesus Christus a morte resurgens, peccatum et mortem damnans, suam iustitiam nobis impartiens, sua merita nobis donans, suam manum super nos ponens, et bene habemus et legem implemus, et peccatum mortemque superamus, de quo sit honor, laus et gratiarumactio deo in saecula saeculorum, amen.

Hoc ergo spectaculum supremum, in quo iam non modo supra mala nostra sed etiam supra bona nostra elevati sumus et sedemus iam in bonis alienis, alieno labore partis, qui prius iacuimus in malis, alieno peccato conquisitis et nostro auctis. Sedemus, inquam, in iustitia Christi, qua ipse iustus est, quia huic nos adhaeremus, per quam ipse deo placet et pro nobis mediator interpellat et totum se nostrum facit optimus sacerdos et patronus. Quam ergo impossibile est, ut Christus in sua iustitia non placeat, tam impossibile est, ut nos fide nostra, qua illius iustitiae inhaeremus, non placeamus. Quibus fit, ut Christianus sit omnipotens, omnium dominus, omnia habens, omnia faciens, prorsus sine ullo peccato. Quod si etiam in peccatis sit, tamen necesse est, ut non noceant, sed donentur propter iusuperabilem et omnia peccata exhaurientem iustitiam Christi, in qua fides nostra nititur, fortiter credens, talem nobis esse Christum qualem diximus. Nam qui id non credit, surdus fabulam audit, nec Christum agnoscit, nec ad quid prosit nec quis eius usus sit intelligit.

Quare vel hoc unum spectrum, si nulla sint alia, tanta nos potest consolatione imbuere, si bene et corde intento spectetur, ut non modo malis nostris non doleamus sed etiam gloriemur in tribulationibus, prae gaudio, quod in Christo habemus, vix ea sentientes. Qua gloria nos erudiat ipse

wie St. Paulus in der ersten Epistel zu den von Corinth am ersten Capitel, V. 30., sagt. Denn ich bin ein Sünder, aber ich werde geführt in seiner Gerechtigkeit, die mir gegeben ist. Ich bin unrein und unkeusch; aber seine Heiligkeit ist meine Heiligmachung, in der ich lieblich und wohl geführt werde. Ich bin ein Narr, aber seine Weisheit führet und bringt mich weg. Ich bin ein verdammlich Mensch; aber seine Freiheit ist meine Erlösung und die allersicherste Fuhr.

106. Also, daß ein christlich Mensch, wenn es allein solches glaubt, sich nicht anders mag der Verdienste und aller Güter Christi, unsers lieben HErrn und Seligmachers, rühmen, denn wenn es sie selbst gethan und verdient hätte. Sogar sein Christi, unsers HErrn, Verdienste unser eigen; also daß sich ein christlich Mensch nun gar nichts mehr besorgt, sondern unerschrocken wartet auf das Gericht und Urtheil GOttes. Wiewohl sonst das Gericht GOttes ein unleidlich Ding ist. Ein so groß Ding ist es um den Glauben, so große Güter gibt er uns, so große würdige Kinder GOttes macht er. Denn wir mögen auch nicht anders Kinder sein, wir erben denn seine Güter.

107. Darum soll ein Christenmensch mit gutem und ganzem Vertrauen sagen, 1 Cor. 15, 55. 56.: „O Tod! wo ist dein Sieg? O Tod! wo ist dein Stachel, das ist, die Sünde? Denn der Stachel des Todes ist die Sünde, und die Stärke der Sünde, das Gesetz, oder die Gebote. Aber GOtt sei gedankt, der uns hat durch JEsum Christum, unsern HErrn, den Sieg gegeben.“ Das ist so viel geredet: Das Gesetz macht uns zu Sündern, die Sünde macht uns schuldig. Wer hat nun diese zwei Dinge, die Sünde und Schuld

with full confidence: “O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” [1 Cor. 15:55 ff.] That is to say, the law makes us sinners, and sin makes us guilty of death. Who hath conquered these twain? Was it our righteousness, or our life? Nay: it was Jesus Christ, rising from the dead, condemning sin and death, bestowing on us His merits, and holding His hand over us. And now it is well with us, we keep the law, and vanquish sin and death. For all which be honor, praise, and thanksgiving unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

This, then, is the highest image of all, in which we are lifted up, not only above our evils, but above our blessings as well, and are set down amid strange blessings, brought together by another's labor; whereas we formerly lay among evils, heaped up by another's sin, [315] and added to by our own. We are set down, I say, in Christ's righteousness, with which He Himself is righteous; because we cling to that righteousness by which He is well pleasing to God, intercedes for us as our Mediator, and gives Himself wholly to be our own, as our High-Priest and Protector. Therefore, as it is impossible that Christ, with His righteousness, should not please God, so it is impossible that we should not please Him. Hence it comes that a Christian is almighty, lord of all, [316] having all things, and doing all things, wholly without sin. And even if he have sins, they can in no wise harm him, but are forgiven for the sake of the inexhaustible righteousness of Christ that swalloweth up all sins, on which our faith

[315] PE: He means the sin of Adam.

[316] Thoughts later more fully expressed in *The Liberty of a Christian Man* (1520) found in PE 2, 295-348 | AE 31, 327-377.

Christus dominus ac deus noster in saecula benedictus, AMEN.

Τελοσ.

His nugis meis, Illustrissime Princeps, officium qualecunque paupertatis meae testantibus me Illustrissimae D. T. commendo, maiora offerre paratissimus, si facultas spiritus mei votis responderit unquam. Neque enim aliquando non ero debitor cum cuivis meo proximo tum maxime Illustrissimae d. t. quam nobis clementi bonitate diu servet incolumem et foelici tandem fine ad se reducat dominus noster Ihesus Christus, Amen.

Illustrissimae D. T.
Orator
Frater Martinus Luther
Aug. Vuittenbergensis.

überwunden? Hat das gethan unsere Gerechtigkeit? Hat das gethan unser Leben? O nein, sondern unser HErr JEsus Christus, als er vom Tode wieder auferstanden ist und die Sünde und den Tod verdammt hat, und seine Gerechtigkeit uns mitgetheilt, sein Verdienst uns geschenkt und seine Hand auf uns gelegt hat, davon wir gesund sein worden, sein Gesetz und Gebot erfüllen und die Sünde und den Tod überwinden. Derhalben GOtt Ehre, Lob und Danksagung sei zu ewigen Zeiten, Amen.

108. Darum dies allerhöchste Bildniß, in welches wir nun nicht allein über alle unsere Uebel, sondern auch über unsere Güter erhaben sein, und sitzen nun in fremden Gütern, die mit fremder Arbeit erlangt sein: so wir doch zuvor in Uebeln gelegen haben, die ohne uns durch fremde Sünde kommen sein und durch unsere eigene Sünde zugenommen haben. Also, sage ich, wir sitzen in der Gerechtigkeit Christi, unsers HErrn, mit welcher er gerecht ist. Denn wir sein derselbigen anhängig, durch welche er GOtt gefällt und unser Mittler vor GOtt ist und für uns bittet und sich ganz unser macht; und ist also der allerfrömmste Priester, Vorbitter und Patron. Darum eben als unmöglich es ist, daß Christus in seiner Gerechtigkeit GOtt nicht sollte gefällig sein; also unmöglich ist es, daß wir GOtt in unserm Glauben, durch den wir an der Gerechtigkeit Christi, unsers HErrn, hoffen, sollten mißfallen.

109. Daher es kommt, daß ein christlich Mensch ein allmächtig, allvermögend Ding und ein Herr aller Dinge ist, der alle Dinge hat, besitzt und thut, und gänzlich ohne Sünde ist. Und wenn gleich ein Christenmensch in Sünden ist, so müssen sie doch von Noth wegen nicht zu

relies, firmly trusting that He is such a Christ unto us as we have described. But if any one does not believe this, he hears the tale with deaf ears,[317] and does not know Christ, and understands neither what blessings He hath nor how they may be enjoyed.

Therefore, if we considered it aright and with attentive hearts, this image alone would suffice to fill us with so great comfort that we should not only not grieve over our evils, [Rom. 5:3] but even glory in our tribulations, nay, scarcely feel them, for the joy that we have in Christ. In which glorying may Christ Himself instruct us, our Lord and God, blessed for evermore. Amen. [Rom. 9:5]

EPILOGUE

With these prattlings of mine, Most Illustrious Prince, in token of my willingness to serve your Lordship to the best of my poor ability, I commend myself to your Illustrious Lordship, being ready to bring a worthier offering, if ever my mental powers shall equal my desires. For I shall always remain a debtor to every neighbor of mine, but most of all to your Lordship, whom may our Lord Jesus Christ, in His merciful kindness, long preserve to us, and at last by a blessed death take home to Himself. Amen.

Your Most Illustrious Lordship's
Intercessor,
Brother Martin Luther,
Augustinian at Wittenberg.

[317] PE: Cf. Terence's *surdo narrare fabulam. Heauton.,* 222.

Schaden und Beschwerung reichen; sondern vergeben werden von wegen der Gerechtigkeit Christi, unsers HErrn, die unüberwindlich ist, und alle Sünde ausgeschöpft. Auf welche Gerechtigkeit Christi unser Glaube sich verläßt, und festiglich glaubt, daß Christus, unser HErr, also gethan sei, wie ich ihnen angezeigt habe. Denn wer das nicht glaubt, der ist taub und hat das, so ich ihm bisher gesagt, nicht gehört, und erkennet den HErrn Christum nicht, und verstehet auch nicht, wozu der HErr Christus dient, und wie man ihn gebrauchen soll.

110. Darum kann und mag dies einige Bildniß, wenn gleich kein ander Bildniß wäre, uns mit so großer Vertröstung versehen, wenn es wohl und mit fleißigem Herzen angesehen wird, daß wir nicht allein in unsern Uebeln keinen Schmerz und Leid tragen; sondern uns auch in unsern Anfechtungen und Betrübniß erfreuen und berühmen vor Freuden, die wir in unserm HErrn Christo haben, und davor unser Uebel, Beschwerung und Widerwärtigkeit, so wir leiden, kaum empfinden. Mit welcher Ehre und Glorie uns gebe zu unterweisen und begaben unser HErr und GOtt, JEsus Christus, zu ewigen Zeiten gebenedeiet, Amen.

Durchlauchtigster Hochgeborner Churfürst, gnädigster Herr, mit diesem meinem untüchtigen Bedenken, befehle E. C. F. G. ich mich unterthäniglich, als mit einer demüthigen Ehrerbietung der Gebühr und Ziemung meiner Armuth.

E. C. F. G. Demüthiger Caplan,
Bruder M. Luther, Augustiner.

Appendix A: Consolacyon for troubled consciences.

Both of the major editions of the collected works of Luther, the Philadelphia Edition and the American Edition, overlooked the earliest translation of *The Fourteen of Consolation* into English.[318] However, recently Phetsanghane has brought to light an earlier one. "Consolacyon for troubled consciences" was published at "Malborow" [319] by "Joannem Philoponon" [320] in 1538, just three years after Luther's preface was written for the printed edition, in a volume entitled *Certeine prayers and godly meditacyons very nedefull for euery Christen*.

Noteworthy is the exclusion from the translation of any material that would identify Luther as the author, namely, as they are termed in the Philadelphia Edition, the prefatory note and the dedicatory epistle. According to Phetsanghane the closing remarks by Luther are omitted as well,[321] as those naturally would also identify Luther by his subscription.

The Biblical quotations seem not to be rendered in accordance with any one early English translation of the Bible and therefore appear to have been created as the text demanded.

The text for "Consolacyon for troubled consciences" comes from the transcription work of Text Creation Partnership produced from Early English Books Online (EEBO-TCP).[322] Their transcription, the only source for the text that is available on the internet, has been kindly placed in the public domain and therefore permitted its inclusion in the present work. The work suffers from some *lacunae* and these are marked as a pair of square brackets with ellipses in between. For those interested in the finer details of the edition, such as where line and page breaks occur, the EEBO-TCP provides access to various digital formats on their website.[323]

[318] PE 1, 107. AE 42, 120
[319] i.e. Antwerp.
[320] i.e. H. Peetersen van Mideelburch.
[321] Phetsanghane 7, n. 9
[322] An overview may be accessed at: https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebogroup/.
[323] https://name.umdl.umich.edu/A09935.0001.001
See also:
https://ota.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/repository/xmlui/handle/20.500.12024/A09935?show=full

THappostel Paule in the .xv. to the Romayns (goynge about to describe the cōfortes of Christen) sayth Whatsoeuer thinges are wryten a fore tyme are wryten for oure lerning that we thorough pacyence and comfort of the scripture shuld haue hope wherby he teacheth pleynly that we must seke oure comfort out of the holy scripture.

Nowe doth his scripture vse .ij. figures of cōfort settynge forth and declaryng vnto vs .ij. ymages of euyll and good thinges myxte in a dewe and most holsome temperature. As the wyse Ecclesiastique sayth. In the day of euylles remembre good thinges and in the day of good thinges remembre euyll thinges. Well knoweth the holy ghoost that euery thing is of suche value and power to a man as his mynde & oppynion is in it. For that whiche in his oppinyōie vyle & of no reputacyon he casteth but lytell loue vnto it yf it chaunce to him and lytyll regardeth yf it falle from hym, Therfore his laboure is to plucke and cal awey a man from this mynde and opinion of this worldly possessyons. This done: now are all thinges indifferent howe be it syth this calling awey is chiefly done by the worde of God (wherby thoppinyon is reuocate frō the thing whiche presently is desired to the thing which is absent & not desired) of verey ryght we shall haue confort of nothyng but scripture whiche in the day of euylles calleth vs to loke for goodnesse whiche other is present or to come and in the day of goodnesse to loke for euyll. Howe be it that we may knowe these visyōs & ymages the better we shall deuide eche of theym in to .vij. partes. The fyrst ymage shall haue euylles whiche shalbe cō sidered: first with in hym selfe. Secundly byfore hym thirdly after hym fourthly byside hym in the lyft hond fyftly on his ryght hond. syxtly beneth hym, Seuently aboue hym.

The first chapiter of the first ymage whiche is the inward euyll.

THis is sure stable & most true (whether man beleue it or not) that there can be no vexacyon and punysshement so greate in man but that there is hym bothe euyll and iniquite moche worse. So abundaunt & copiouse are his euylles whiche he fealeth not. If truely he dyd feale his euyll he shulde feale very hell for he hath helle in hī self. Thou wilt are howe? The prophete sayeth euery man is a lyer. And ageyn Euery man lyuing is all vany [...]e. To be vayne and a lyar is to be voyd of truth and to be voyd of truth is to be with out god and to be nothing. And that is to be in hell & dampned. Therfore God chastynyng vs mercyfully doth open and put on vs oure casier and lyghter offences knowing that yf he shuld lede and brynge man to knowe his hole misery he shulde perisshe within a lytell space howebeyt he hath caused some to feale & tast their owne of whome it is wrytten he leadeth downe to hell and bryngeth ageyn. Wherfore they say well whiche call the bodyly passyons certeyn warnynges and monisshementes of the euyl whiche lieth with in. And thappostel in the .xij. to the Ebrewes calleth theym the fatherly instructions of God [...]ayng he scourgeth euery sonne that he rece [...] ueth which he doth that by these scourgy [...] ges & lytell euylles he may expell the great euylles lest after he be compelled to feale theym as it is wryten in the .xxij. of the prouerbes folisshenesse is bound to gyther in the hert of the chylde but the rodde of correccyon shall auoyde it. Do not kynde fathers more lament their chylder yf they be theues or euyll them yf they be wounded, yeis they thē selues do bete theym & wounde theym that they shulde not be euil. Whace then lettyth that this abhominable euil with in vs is not felt? truely as I sayde the prouidence of god that man (cōsidering his inward corrupcyon & vice) shuld not perisshe. For he hydeth theym wylling that by onely fayth they shulde be sene perfectly though he doth showe some part of theym by a sensyble euyll. Therfore in the daye of euylles remembre goodnesse. Consyder howe good it is not to knowe thyne hole euyll. Remembre well this goodnesse and thy sensyble euyll shall the lesse vexe the.

And cōtrary in the day of goodnesse remē bre euylles that is when thou dost not feale thy true euylles yet se thou be not vnkynd but remembre thy true euylles and so shalt thou feale the lesse thy sensyble euylles. Therfore it is euydent that in man there is rather lacke of sorowe then sufficyent sorowe in this lyfe not bycause that his euyll is not present byfore hym but bycause the affeccyon opinion and mynde of it is not present whiche thorowe the goodnesse of god is hydden.

For we may se theym to whome it is gyuen to knowe theyre hole iniquite howe fearse & cruell they are ageynst theym selfe howe they regard not to suffer thorough all theyre lyfe whate thing so euer it were so that they felt not theyre hell and mysery.

[Page]Euyn so wolde euery man do yf he eyther knewe or did beleue suerly his inward euyll he wolde of his owne wyll call vnto hym outward euylles ye reioyse in theym and be no more sadde for theym then though he were in all prosperyte and felt no tribulacyon as some holy men haue done emong the whiche Dauid was [...]e Psalme .C.vi.

Therfore the fyrst cōfortable ymage [...]s to say vnto hym self. O thou man yet thou fealest not thyne euyll be

glad & gyue th [...]nkes that thou act not cōpelled to feale [...] so thyne euyll in comparyson of that g [...]t euyll is but lyght and easy & that it is t [...]t some say, I haue deserued moche wors [...]e helle whiche is sone sayd but it is into [...]erable to felt. And this euell though it [...]e [...]ruer so hydde and secret yet he bryng [...]h forth his frute sensibly whiche is fear [...] & wauering of the fearfull cōsciences by [...]e whiche faythe is fore beseged and assa [...]ed whyle that man douteth and is vncert [...]n whether god be mercyful vnto hym or not and the weaker this frute is the more [...]tter is this frute.

And this onely infyrmite yf he be well cōsydered and loked on syth it is spirituall doth ferre passe al bodyly trouble and maketh it to seme but a trifell yf that they be well compared to gither.

Besides this all that the churche speaketh of when she reherseth so oft vanite & affliction of the sprete perteyne to the inward euilles. What counseyles do we take in vayn [...]howe many of oure purposes are mocke [...]? howe many thinges se we? howe many heare we: that we wolde neither se nor heare & these thynges that some tyme make for oure purpose some time are agaynst it [...] so moche that nothing is hole & perfait Furthermore the more honoure & dignite [...] man is set in the more and greater are his trāsgressions & the more is hes vexed with hetes waues and other stormes aboue all other so that the .C.iij. psalme may wel say The reare in the see of this world [...] bestes and greate and treapyng wor [...] without nombre that is to say infinite [...]indes of temptations so that for this cause Iob in the .vij. calleth a mannes lyfe no thing but temptacyon.

And these are not therfore the lesse euil [...] bicause they be but lytel fealt but bicause they are so in vse and familier with vs we sette the lesse by theym. And therfore (as god wold also it shuld be) they moue & trouble vs but seide all though we can not fully dispyse & forget theym. And trewe it is that we feale & perceaue scāt the thousand part of dure euylles. And yet we feale not those accordyng to the truth and greuousnesse of theym but measure theym by oure opinion affection and mynde.

The secunde chaptre of the secūde image whiche is the euyll to come or bifore a man.

IT shall not a lytell easy thy present euyll what soeuer it be if thou turne thy mynde to consyder thynges to come whiche are so manye & of suche efficacyte that vnto them is onlye ascribed the greate & greuous passyō of mynde called feare. For thus some diffine it. Feare is a passyō of the mynde about euyll to come ī so moche that cappostel sayeth go not about to sa fauoure hyge thynges but feare. And the more vncerteyn this euil is the greater it is in so moche that it is a comon prouerbe there is none age paste the stable altough this disease belonge to chylder and babes.

Do that by this ye may gather that there is no mā sure & fre from any other mannes infirmyte. But what soeuer one man suffereth the same may an other suffer also. To this pertayne all storyes & tragedyes of all worldes & all the compleyntes of this worlde. To this also maye be applyed that certeyn men haue obserued more then iij. hundreth diseases with the whiche mā nes bodi mai be vexed If thē there be so mani diseases how many accydentes thinkest thou are there that may chaūce vpō oure goodes & vpō oure frēdes? Howe many encōbraūces & turmētes of the soule whiche is the princpall groūde wherin consist all these euylles & the onely receauer of sorowe & sadnesse. And the greater a man is & in the more dignite the more the streyngth & fealinge of this euyll encreaseth And were rayneth pouertie slaunder & suche other (syth they may sone chaunce) it is nedefull that they be feared euery houre euen as though they did hang ouer vs by a lytell threde. Lyke as the swerde whyche dyonisius the tiraunt dyd hāge ouer his geestes hedes Of all these thīges whatsoeuer doth not chaunce vnto the count it for a vanurage and as it were for a comforte of the euil whiche thou art striken with al that also here thou mayst be compelled to say with Hieremas. It is the merci of god that we are not consumed For whiche so euer doth not come vnto vs it is kept of by the strong hond of god whiche compasseth vs with suche power and might (as it is shewed in Iob) that Satā and other euylles are wroth that they are kept from vs Therefore we se howe swetely god shuldt be loued when any thyng chaunceth to vs For this most louing father warneth vs) b [...] this one euyll) to beholde howe many euylles are aboute to subdue vs if he dit not defend vs as though he shulde say sathan and the hole hell of euylles persue to subdue the but I haue prescribed & set the ende of the see & haue sayd vnto hym hyther shall thy swelling waues and come here shal they ceate and be broken as he sayeth in the .xxxviij. of Iob.

But be it paraduenture that god wil that none of them shall come yet at the lest that which is called most fearfull of all (that is death) shall suerlye come and nothing so vnsuer as hys tyme and houre whyche euyll truely is so greate, that we may se many mē whiche had leuer lyue and continue with al those euilles them ones do dye to haue theym all fynisshed. And to thys one (contempnyng all

other) scripture putteth feare saying remembre thy last ende & thou shalt neuer synne. To this se howe many meditacyons: howe many bokes: howe many meanes: howe many remedies: are ymagined that by the memorye of this one euil they may feare vs from synne make vs dispyse the world alleuiate oure passyons & euylles and cōfort theym that are vexed by the comparyson of this horrible & greate euyll whyche for all that is necessarye. There is no man whiche wolde not desyre to suffer all euylls yf he myght by those auoyde death for deth holy men did feare ye Chryst hym self went to his deth with feare and bloudy droppes of swette. Finally so horryble is this euyll that the mercie of god neuer toke more diligence then to comfort oure weaknesse in this mater as we shall se hereafter.

All those thinges are comyn and indifferent to all men euen as the benefytes of helth are comyn to theym that are vexed. Howe be it to the christen there is a newe and speciall cause to feare this euyll to come which dothe ferre passe all other euylles. And this is it that thappostel deschry [...]eth .i. Corin .x. sayenge. Let him that thynketh that he stondeth take hede lest he fall The wey is so slypper and oure enemyes so myghty armed with out owne powers (that is to sey with the socoure of oure owne flessh and of all oure euyll desyres) accō panyed with the infinite multitude of the worlde wyth deuities and pleasures on the reght honde with fearsnesse crueltye of mē & displeasures on the lift honde besydes the craft of subtiltie & a thousād weyes to hurte deceyue and destroye whiche he is instructe wyth al hym selfe. Thus lyue we beynge not sure to contynue one mynute of an houre in our good mynd & purpose.

Saint Cipriane remembring many of these thynges in a pistle whyche he made of mortalyte doth teache that it is good to desyre deth as a quycke helper to scape these euylles. And trulye when these men were in a goode mynde and dyd entreate of these infinyte ieopardyes we do se theym (dispysynge lyfe and death that is to saye al these foresaid euylles) desyre to dye and to be dyssolued so that they myghte be loosed frome the multytude of synnes that are in theym (as we haue sayde in the fyrst image) & into whiche they may fall of the whiche we speake nowe. And truly these .ij. thīges are verey ryghtuouse both to desire deth & also to set lyght by all these euylles ye vtterly to dispyse theym yf god stryke the or moue the with one of theym for it is te gyft of god to be moued wyth theym. What true Chrysten is there whiche wold not desyre to be diseased ye and to dye whyche seyth and fealeth hym selfe whyle he is hole to be yn synne and that he may continuelly runne into more and dayly fall in theym and so to transgresse the specyall and good wil of his most dere father.

With thys here and indygnation was Paule vexed and sturred vppe (in the vnto the romayns) when he had compleyned that he coud not do to good wicht he wolde haue done but that he dyd the euyll whiche he wolde not haue done he cryed out. O wretched mā that I am who shal delyuer me frō this bodi of death the grace of god (he sayde) by Iesus chryst he doth lytel loue god his father whiche doth not hate more the euill of synne then he doth death sith that god dyd ordeyn death for this purpose that it myght at the length fynysshe this euyll of synne so that deth may be the mynistre of lyfe and ryghtuousnesse of the whiche we shall speke hereafter.

The thirde chapiter of the thyrdey mage whiche is the euyl that is passed or behind vs.

IN thys chiefly aboue all other doth the swete mercy of god oure father shyne and set forth it selfe whiche is abyll to comforte vs in all veracyon and ieoperdyes. Nether is there any man whiche fealeth the hand of god more ready with hym then when he doth reherse & meditate the yeares of his lyfe past. Saynt Austine sayeth yf that the choyse were gyuen to a man that he shulde other dye or elles to lyue hys life passed agayn as he hath liued it that he wolde chose rather to dye: seyng his greate ieoperdies & euilles whice (scarcely and with great peryll) he hath escaped whiche opynyon is verey true if it be well extemed. Here he may se howe often he hath done many thinges with out studie and regard ye clene cōtrary to his purpose. And hath also suffred many thynges with out counceyll and prouision byfore they were done and when they were done in so moche that (merueyling with hym self) he is cōpelled to saye howe are these thinges come to passe whiche I neuer thought to do but rather contrary. So that the prouerbe is founde verey true man purposeth & god dysposeth that is to sey bryngeth to passe other thinges then man doth purpose. So that by this one text it is more euidēt then we can denye that oure life and goodes ar gouerned by the hyghe and merueillous power prouision and goodnesse of god and not by oure owne wysdome.

Here we may perceyue howe oft god hath byn with vs when we haue nether sene nor felt hym. And howe trewe it is that Petre sayeth he taketh the charge and prouydeth for al vs. Wherfore yf there were nether bokes nor preachinges yet oure lyfe hir selfe whiche is ledde thorough so mani perylles and ieoperdies may

abundauntly testyfie and comend vs the godly goodnesse most ready and swetist whiche hath taken vp and borne vs in his bosom farre beyond all oure prouision and witte. And as Moses in the .xxxij. Deuteronomyon sayeth. The lorde hath kept hym as the ball of hys eye he hath ledde hym about and borne hym on hys shulders.

And of this spring all the exhortacions in the psalter I haue remēbred the olde dayes. I haue cōsidered in meditacion all these workes & creatures. I shall remembre frō the beginnyng all thy merueilles. And I haue remēbred thy iugemētes & am comforted. These & suche other perteyne herunto that we maye surely knowe sith that he was them present with vo whē we sawe hym not nor thought it that he is also nowe present with vs while he semith to vs to be absēt For he that toke vs in suche necessite with out oure consent wil not forsake vs in a lytell trouble though he seme to leaue vs as he sayeth in Esaie. I haue forsaken the for a mynytte & lytell space & in greate mercy will gather the agayn & receyue the. Here maist thou put in these thinges who was he that toke the charge of vs so many nyghtes whyle we were slepyng. Who was he that toke thought for vs as oft as we laboured played & dyd in the other infinyte thynges in the whyche we loke no thought for oure selfe. Or howe long ys the tyme in the whiche we [...]ake regard to oure selfe The Couetous mā taketh thought to seke money yet in the seking & labouring for it it is necessary that he put a part hys though. So we may so that all oure care (wether we wil or not) retourneth onely to god & verey seldome it is that we are left in oure owne prouysion whyche yet sometyme god doth suffer that he may lerne vs to knowe his goodnesse that at the length we may perceyue what grete difference there is bytwene his prouision and ours. So it chaunceth that he wyll suffer vs sumtyme te be stryken with some lyght dysease or other euell faynyng as though he holpe vs not (howe be it in dede he dothe euer helpe vs) but yet he forbyddeth that those whyche are about vs assaut vs not so fyersly that they suppresse vs so to tempt vs as hys dere chyldren whether we wyll commytte to hys prouysyon all the resydue of oure lyfe and to se howe weke & vnproufitable oure care and prouision is what do we? y [...] or what can we proufit oure selfe in al oure life? whiche are not a bill to heale shortly a lytell ache in the thyghe: whye then are we so hasty to berydde in a moment frō oure parylles and euilles? and leaue not rather to hym the charge & cure of it fyth that by hym we are delyuered (oure owne self beryng witnesse) from so many euylles and kept without oure oune ꝓuision. To knowe these thinges is to knowe the workes of god to considre and remembre hys workes and by that remembraunce to be cōforted in all aduersitees. They that knowe not this shall runne into the daunger that there is spokē of in the Psalme .xxviij. Bycause they haue not vnderstond the workes of god and the workes of his hondes thou shalt destroye theym and not edyfye theym. For they are vnkind to the hole prouision of god gyuen theym in all theyre lyfe whiche in al lytel minycte committe not to hym the hole charge and prouision.

The fourth chapitre of the fourth ymage whiche is the euyll beneth vs.

YEt we se none other thing ī al the euilles that we suffer thē that the goodnesse of god is so greate & so redy w^{t} vs that emong the īnumerabyl euylles wyth which we are compassed on eueri syde ye & in whiche we are fulli prisoned scāta fewe (nor thei at al times) are suffred to assayle vs in so moche that the euil wherwith we are supp̄ssed is but a warninge of a grete auauntage w^{t} whiche god endueth vs whyle that he suffreth vs not to be oppressed with the multitude of euilles with the whiche we are beseged.

What a myracle is it for a man to bestrykē at on euery syde with infinite strokes and chaunce at the length to be touched but with one? yee it is a greate grace that he is not stryken with theym all and a myracle that he is not touchet with many. Therfore the first of those euylles whiche are by neth is death The secunde is hell yf we shulde consyder the dyuers and vyle deth of other men wherwith synnars are stryken we shall sene perceyue wyth howe grete lucre we suffre lesse then oure deseruinges. Howe many are strangled wyth halters galowes and water or dye with swerde whyche paraduenture haue done moche lesse synnes then we haue done.

In so moche that theyre [...]th and mysery may be leyd bifore vs of Christ for an ymage & glasse wheryn we may perceyue whate we haue deserued For so he answered in the .xiij. of lyke when there were present that shewed hym of the galyleans whose bloude pylate myngled with theyre owne sacrifice. Suppose ye that these galyleans were gretter synnars then all other galyleans bycause they suffred suche punysshement? I tell you nay but except ye repent ye shall all in lyke wise perisshe. Or thynke ye that those .xviij. Vppon whome the coure in Siloe fill and slewe theym were synners aboue all men that dwell in Ierusalem? I tell you naye but except ye repēt ye al shall lyke wise perysshe.

Nether can we thinke that we ought lesse to be

punysshed whyche haue commytted as great or gretter crymes. Nether the iustice & truthe of god will be for oure cause other vnequall or false whiche hath or dyned to geue to euery man acordyng to hys dedes yf we do not preuent and at the lest suffre some lytel euyll pacyently that is gyuen vs of god most mercyfully for a warnyng to exchewe the gretest euell.

Howe many thousandes are there in hell and euerlasting dampnation whiche haue not the thousand part of oure synnes: howe many virgyns? chyldren? and whiche we call innocentes? howe many religious prestes? and maryed men? whiche semed thorow all theyre lyfe to serue god & peraduenture falling into one synne are dampned perpetually. We will not dissemble. There is one ryghtuousnesse of god ī euery synne. He hateth equally & condēpneth synne in who so euer it be founde. May we not here se the inestymable and bounteous mercy of god whiche hath not dampned vs that so oft haue offended? howe moche I pray the is it that we can suffer in all oure lyfe? to be compared to euerlasting payne whiche they suffer deseruyng it b [...]one transgression. And yet we whiche haue so oft transgressed are saued. Truely it is a great vnkindnesse and extreme hardnesse of vnbeleue that we so lytell regard and so coldly magnifye these hyghe benefytes of god. Bysydes thys hyther thou mayst applye so many infydelles natyons Iewes infauntes tho whome if the grace had byn gyuen whiche is gyuē to vs they shuld not be in hell but in heuyn and shulde moche lesse haue synned thē we haue. For Crist in the .xi. of Mathewe s [...]t [...]h this ymage before oure yes saying wo be to the Chorosaym wo be thou. Both sayd [...] for yf the miracles whyche were shewed in you had byn shewed in tyre & Sydon they had repented long a gone in sackeclo the & asshes. Neuerthelesse I say to you it shall be easyer for Tyre and Sidon at the day of iugement then for you. And thou Caphernaum wyiche art lyft vp vnto heuyn shalt bethruft downe vnto hell for yf the myracles whiche haue byn done in the had byn shewed in zodom: they had remained to this day. Neuerthelesse I say vnto you it shalbe easier for zodom in the day of iudgement then for the. We se therfore howe moche prayse & loue we owe vnto oure mercyful god in al the euylles of this lyfe bycause it is scant one droppe of that we haue deserued. Whiche Iob compareth to the see and the grauell of the see.

The fyfte Chapter of the fyfte ymage whiche is the euyll on the lyft hond.

HEre set byfore thyne yies the hole kepe and multitude of aduersaries and euyll men. And first consydre in theym howe many euylles they haue not done to oure body goodes name and soule whiche they wolde haue done except (by the prouisyō of god) they had byn letted. And the hygher any man is in tale & auctorite the more redy at hond he is to be vexed with the deceytes soutteltyes flaunders & tēptacyons of his aduersaryes. And in all these thinges we may vnderstonde and proue the honde of god most ready to delyuer vs. And whate merueyll is it though somtyme we be vexed with one of these euylles? After this cōsyder the euylles whiche are appropryate vnto oure aduersaryes: not to be glad or reioyse in theym but rather to suffer with theym and to be sorye for they are subiect indifferently to these euylles as well as we as we haue shewed before.

But in this they are more wretched that they are separate from oure company both bodyly and spiritually. This euyll whiche we suffer is nothing to theyrs for they are in synne in vnbeleue vnder the wrath of god vnto the power of the deuell wretched bondmen of vngodlynesse and synne in so moche that yf the hole worlde wolde curse & banne theym: they can desire no worse vnto theym. This well cōsidered we shall loue perceyue with howe moche gretter loue we ought to suffer this lytell dysease of the body in the fayth in the kyngdome of Christ and in the seruice of God whiche in thabundaunce of these cōmodytees and vertues ought scant to be fealt. Theyre mysery also so ought to be so rowed in a Christē and meke hart that his sorowe seme not to be paynfull but rather pleasure vnto hym. For so commaundeth Paule in the secunde to the Philippians let euery man cōsydre not whate is in him selfe but whate is in other men let the same mynd be in you whiche was in Christ Iesu whiche beyng in the shape of god toke on hym the shape of a seruaunt that is to say with a meke and a lowe mynde put on hym oure shape orderyng hym self none otherwise in oure euylles then yf they had byn his owne. So forgettyng his godhed and other pleasures he made hym selfe of no reputacyon that he myght be founde in euery poynt lyke man separatyng nothing that man had from hym but onely synne submyttyng hym self to all other infirmytees. The holy men (streyngthed with this mynde and sturred vp with this ymage) were wont to pray for euyll men ye and for theyre enemyes. And to do all thinges accorddyng to the example of Christ forgettyng theyre owne iniuryes or ryghtuousnesse taking thought howe they shulde delyuer theym from theyre euylles. And with this werre mothe more trouble then with theyre owne bodyly euylles.

As Saynt Petre wrytteth of lot in the secunde Chapitre of the secunde Epistle he beyng ryghtuous and dwellyng emong theym in seyng and hearyng vexed his ryghtuous soule from day to day with theyr vnryghtuous deades.

Here thou seyst whate a depth of euylles appereth and whate occasyon is gyuen to be mercyfull and to suffer with theym & vtterly to dyspyse oure lytell incōmodyte yf the charyte of god be in ve and howe God will let vs suffer nothing in cōparyson to these that they suffer. The cause that these thinges do b [...] tytell moue vs is this

[Page]The lye of oure hart is not pure ynough wher with we shulde se howe grete shame and mysery it is for a man to lye vnder synne that is to saye to be forsaken of God & possessed of the deuell. Who is so hard harted that wyll not pytye the myserabyll cō dicyon of theym whiche lye before the churche and in the streates with deformed faces theyre noses eaten of theyr iyes out & other of theyr membres cōsumed with matter fylthe and corrupcyō in so moche that the sense can not onely abyde to beholde it but also the mynde doth abhorre to remembre it. And whate meaneth god by these lamentable mōstres of our flessh & lykenesse but to open the iyes of oure mynde that we may perceyue with whate en horrible facyon the soule of a synnar sheweth out his matter and corrupcyon though he hym selfe walke in purpyll and in golde couered with roses and lylyes as though he were all redy in paradise. But how many synners are there in the worlde in cōparyson of one of these deformed persones: Truely these infynite euylles bothe in gretnesse & in nōbre dispysed ī oure neyghboures doo cause ours (though, it be but one and that verey small) to seme to vs verey grete & detestable. Howe be it also in bodyly tribulacyōs they are in worse cōdicyon them we are. For I pray ye what thing can be to theym swete and acceptable (though they had & myght obteyne all thinges that they desired) seyng that theyre cōscience can not be quyet: is there any thing more abhominable then a grudgyng or byting cōscience For Esaye sayeth in the .lvij. Chaptre: the wicked are as the boyling see whiche can not be quyet and his floudes do habound into subiection and mourning. And the lorde god sayeth there is not peace (whiche is the verey tranquyllite of conscience) vnto the wicked. Therfore thou mayst se that verefyen in theym whiche is wryten in the xxviij. of Deuteronomyon. The lord shall gyue the a fearefull hart & deceauyng iyes and a soule cōsumed with sorowe & thy lyfe shall be hangyng before the & thou shalt feare day and nyght & thou shalt not trust thy lyfe in the morning thou shalt say who shall geue me the euentyde. And in the euenyng who shall geue me the mornyng? Bicause of the feare of thy hart for thou wal [...] be feared & for those thinges whiche thou shalt see with thyne yies. Fynally he that dyd consyder with a good mynde the vttermost poynt of euylles other of his enemyes or of his frendes he wolde not onely forget his owne troubles thinkyng hym selfe that he suffred no thing but wolde also with Moyses and thappostell Paule breke out and desire that it myght be leful for hym to dye for theym and to be made cursed frō Christ & to be put out of the boke of lyfe (as it is wryten in the .ix. to the Romayns) that they myght be delyuered and saued. Christ burnyng with this syre and loue both dyed and went downe to hell for vs leuyng vs an example that we also shulde take thought for other mennes harmes forgettyng oure owne ye rather desyring oure owne.

The syxte Chapitre of the syxt ymage whiche is the euyll on the ryght honde.

ON oure ryghte honde are oure frendes by whose euylles and vexations oure troubles are mitygated and aswaged as Saynte Petre teachet in the fyft of the fyrst Pistle sayenge. Resyst the deuell stedefast in the fayth remembryng that ye do but fulfyll the same affliccions whiche are appoynted to youre bretheren that are in the worlde. So the cōgregacyon of christē areth in theyre prayers that they prouoked be the examples of holy men maye folowe the vertue of theyre passyons and syngeth solemply that the holye men haue suffered turmentes that they myght suerly come to the victorye of martyrdome. By the which wordes and songes of the church we must vnderstōd that the passyons and victoryes that God hath gyuen to his martyres and holy sayntes ought to be had in memory that by theyre example we may be quykened and bolded to suffer those euylles whiche they suffred. And yf theyre commemoracyon be by vs done to any other entent whatsoeuer it be then is it medled with supersticyon & hypocrisie. As is theyrs that honoure theym to thintent that they shulde not suffer the trouble & vexacyō whiche the sayntes by theyr example & memory do teache to be suffred so that they desire to be made vnlyke vnto theym whose feastes they celebrate. Right excellētlye doth thappostle entreate this place of cōfort in the .xij to the Heb. sayēge: ye haue not yet resysted vnto bloud shedīge striuīge ageynst synne

[Page]And ye haue forgotten the consolacyon whiche speaketh vnto you as vnto chyldern. My sonne despyse not the chastenynge of the lorde nether saynt when thou art rebuked of hym: for whō the lorde loueth hym he

chasteneth. If ye shall endure chastenynge god offereth hym selfe vnto you as vnto sonnes what sonne is that whome the father chasteneth not? Yf ye be not vnder correccyō (wherof al ar parte takers) them are ye bastardes and not sonnes. Moreouer seyng we haue fathers of oure flesshe whiche corrected vs and we gaue theyme reuerence: shall we not moch rather be in subieccyon vnto the father of spirituall gyftes and lyue? No maner lernynge for the present tyme semych to be ioyous but greuous neuerthelesse afterward it bryngeth forthe the quyet frute of ryghtuousnesse vnto theym whiche there in are exercysed. These were the wordes of saynt Paule. Who wolde not be abasshed of these wordes where he diffyneth playnely that they are not the sonnes of god whiche are not vnder his lernyng and correccyon Who can more strongly be cōfirmed & more effectuouslye be cōforted then he that heareth that they are loued of god whiche are chastened and that they are the sonnes of god and endued with the cōmunyon of holy men ye they onely are holy whiche suffer and are chastened. This vehement exhortscyō shulde make sufferaunce and correccyon to be loued and desyred. Here is no place to excuse oure selfe that some suffer lesse some more for to euery man is gyuen temptatiō by measure not aboue oure streynght as it is wrytten in the .lxxix. psalme. Thou shalt fede vs with the brede of teares and geue vs drinke in theares in measure whiche Paule doth also saye. God is faithfull whiche suffereth you not to be tempted for ther thē ye be able: ye he wyll put such chaunce vnto the temptacyon that ye may be able to resyst. Therfore where as the gretter euyll and temptacyō is there is the more cōfort and helpe of god. So that the inequalyte of trouble and temptacyō is but onely in the face outwardly and not in the verey thinge. When we nowe at this daye remembre Iohn Baptist shamefully slayne & behedded of Herode doth it not cōfound vs and make vs abasshed? that he beyng suche one (as emōg the chyldren of wymen there arose not a gre [...]ter) the onely frende of the spouse the prepare of christes wa [...]e gretter them all the prophetes was nether slayne by any open iugement nether yet for any fayned cause (as Christ was accused) nether for to auoyd insurreccyon of the people. But was beheded in pryson at the appetyte of a dauncetesse the doughter of a wretched aduoutrous woman. Let then the shameful deth of suche an holy persone suche an holy lyfe of suche a Prophete so wretchedly and vilaynously delyuered into the cruell hōdes of a rybaud that was angry with hym swage and pacyfye al our euyll where was god whiche suffered euē before his eyes such an horrible dede? Where was Christ whiche hearyng of it spake neuer a worde? He dyed as though he had byn vnknowen to god men and all creatures. What suffer we in the whiche we may reioyce? and not rather be vtterly confounded and asshamed yf it be compared vnto this mannes dethe. Or howe shall we be bold to shewe oure faces yf we wyll suffer nothynge syth suche holye men haue suffered suche vyle deth without deseruyng ye and theyre bodyes after theyre deth hath ben made a laughing stocke to theyre enemyes. Behold (sayeth Ieremyas) they whiche had no iugement to drynke of the cuppe drinkyng shall drynke of it & shalt thou be lest innocent? thou shalt not be lefte innocent but drynking thou shalt drinke of it. Therfore the heremyte dyd well whiche because he was wont euerye yere to haue sykenesse and scaped one hole yere without sykenesse was very sadde & wepte sayng that God had forgotten hym & had denyed hym his grace. So necessary and holsome is the correccyon of the lorde to all christē Here we se howe it is nothing that we suffer yf we cōpare it to the prisons Iron fyre bestes water and other infynite tormentes ye yf we ponder well the greuous persecutyons of theym whiche suffer the temptacyons of the deuell beynge present with vs in this lyfe. For there are manye whiche are suffer more sharply and greuouslye them we do bothe in sprete and bodye. Here some man wyll say in this I cō pleyne that my passyon cannot be compared to the passyons of holy men bycause I am a synner not worthy to be compared vnto theym.

They suffered gylties and for innocencye but I suffer for my synnes therfore it [...]s no merueyle though they suffered all thynges pacyently and gladly. This saying is verey folisshe for yf thou suffer for thy synnes thou mayst reioyce that thy synnes be purged. Where not the holy men also synners? but thou fearest lest thou be lyke vnto Herode or to these whiche honge on the left honde.

Thou art not yf thou be pacyent what thīg maketh the differēce bytwene the thefe on the ryght hōde & the thefe on the left hōde? but onely paciēce & impaciēt? Yf thou be a synnar well the thefe was also a synner howe be it his pacyence obtayned the glory of ryghtuousnesse and holynesse.

So do thou lyke wyse for thou cāst not suffer but other for thy synnes or for ryghtuousnesse and bothe these suffrynges make the holy & blessed yf thou loue theym. Wherfore thou hast none excuse left. Finally as thou doest cōfesse that thou suffryst iustly for thy synnes thou arte ryghtuouse and holye as the thefe on the ryghthonde. The knoweleging of thy synne because it is truthe dothe iustifye and make the holy. And euē then immediatly

(after this knowelegyng of thy synne) thou doest not suffer for thy synne but for thy truthe and innocency For a ryghtuous man can not suffer but for the truthe and innocently. Nowe art thou iustifyed by the knoweleginge of thy synne and suffering pacyently. Therfore (and that truely and worthyly) is thy passyon and suffering to de cōpared to the sufferyng of the sayntes euen as the knowelegyng of thy synnes is to be cōpared vnto theyrs. For there is but one truthe of all men the knouwelegyng of synne sufferyng pacyently of all euylles and true cōmunyon of holy men in all and by all thinges,

The seuenth Chaptre of the seuenth ymage whiche is the euyll aboue vs.

IN this last ymage we must lifte vp oure hart and assence vp in to the mountayne of Myrthe with the spouse. Here is Iesus Chryst crucifyed the hed of all chrysten the capteyn of all theym that suffer of whome many haue wryten many thinges And all men (as it is cōuenyent) haue wryten all thinges. His memorye is cōmended vnto the spouse where as it is sayde. Put [...]e as a sygne vpon thyne arme. The bloud of this lambe marked on the post doth put awey the stryking aungell. The spouse of hym is commended because her here is lyke the purpure of a kyng. That is her meditacyon is redde and of purpure coloure by remembryng the passyō of Christ. This is the wodde that Moyses was commaunded to put in to the waters of Marath (that is to say the bitter passions) and they were made swete. There is nothīg but this passyon maketh it swere ye deth. As the spouse doth say his lyppes are lylyes distillyng the chief and pure Myrrhe. What proporcyon is there bytwene lylyes and lyppes? syth these are redde and they whyte. Truely it is spoken mystycally bycause his wordes are most whyte and pure in the whiche is no bloude bytternesse of enuye or malyce but they are swete and mylde with the whiche (neuerthelesse) he doth distyll the most pure and chief myrrhe that is to say persuadeth most bitter death whiche (euen as the most pure and chiefe Mirrhe at one taketh awey all corrupcyō and stynking of the body) taketh awey the corrupcyon and stynking of synne. Of grete power are these most swettest lyppes that are able to make the most bitter deth swete pure whyte and acceptable. But howe shall this be done? Truely whyle thou herest that Iesu Christ the sonne of god hath (by his most holy touching and passyon) consecrate and halowed all oure euylles and suffrynges ye the deth it selfe most extremest and grettest of all other hath blyssed the curse glorifyed the slaunder made ryche the pouertye so that deth is compelled to be the gate of lyfe Curse the begynnyng of blyssyng.

And slaunder the father of glorie howe canst thou nowe be so harde & vnkynde? that thou wilt not both loue ye & also desyre all passyōs & troubles whiche are deped & purified in the most clene & holy flesshe & bloude of Christ & so made vnto the holy innocent holsome blessed & glorifyed. For yf he (by the touchinge of his clene flesshe) hath halowed al waters for baptesme ye al creatures. Howe moche more bi the touchī ge of his moste pure flesshe & bloude had he sanctified al dethes all passiōs al iniuries all curses al slaunders for the baptesme of the sprete or bloude? As he sayeth of the same baptesme or passyō in the .xij. of Luke. I must be baptysed with a baptesme & howe I am payned tyll it be ended? Thou seest how he is payned howe he pantith how he thirsteth to sanctifye and make loued passyon and deth. For he seeth that we are feared with passyons he seeth that deth is feared and abhorred. Wherfore he (as a most meke sheperd and most faythfull phisiseō) goyng aboute to cure oure euyl doth hast and is payned vntyll his dye that by his deth he myght make theym acceptable & welcome to vs. So that the deth of a Christen is to be counted lykē to the brasen serpent of Moses which in all poyntes had the facyon of a serpent but it was clene without lyfe without mouyng without venome without bytyng. So the ryghtuous do apere to theym that a soles to dye howe be it they lyue in peace. We are like to thinges which dye Nether is there any other face outwardly of oure deth then of the deth of other thinges. Howe be it the thinges in dede are other wyse. For to vs deth is deed. Lykewyse all oure other troubles and vexacyons are lyke the troubles of other thī ges but that is onely in the face outwardly. For in very dede oure sufferynges at the begynning of impassibilite euen as deth is the begynnynge of lyfe.

And this is it that Ihon speaketh of in the viij. If a man kepe my sayenges he shall neuer so deth. How shal he not se deth Truely for dying he begynneth lyfe. So that for the lyfe whiche he seeth he can not see deth here the nyght as the day shall belyghtened for there is moche more clere lyght of the lyfe whyche we begynne then there is of the lyfe from whyche we be exyled by deth. And all these thynges are confyrmed and stablisshed to theym whiche beleue in Christ but it is contrary to theym that beleue not Therfore if thou kysse loue and embrace the cote of Chryst vesselles water pottes and suche other that Christ did touche and vse countyng theym grete and swete relykes as though they were consecrated & halowed by this thouchyng whye doest thou not moche more loue

embrace and kysse the paynes & euylles of this worlde slaunder and deth? whiche were not onely halowed by his touching but also clensed and blissed in his pure bloude ye and embraced with the will of his hert his enfamming charyte and mercy mouing hym therunto seyng that in these are moche greater merytes rewardes and goodnesse thē in those relykes for in these are obsteyned for the the victory of deth and heel and of all synnes and so is it not in the relyques. O that we myght se and beholde the hert of Chryst when that hangyng on the crosse he was payned to make death deade and despysed howe feruently & swetely he toke vppon hym paynes and deth for vs that were feerfull and dyd abhorre paynes and deth howe gladly he began to drynk thys cuppe to vs that were dyseased that we shulde not feare after hym to drynke syth we do so that there chaunced none euyll to hym but onely good by rysing agayn.

No doubt chat chyef & pure myrrhe (Crystes lyppes distillyng it and his wordes cō mending it) shulde be moste acceptable ād swete euen as the smell of lylses So writeth Petre in the fyrste pystle for asmuche as Chryst hath suffer for vs in flesshe Arme your selues lykewyse with the same mynde Paule also in the .xij. to the Hebrues. Consyder howe that he endured suche speaking agaynst hym of synners lest ye shulde be weryed ēd saynt in your myndes. Therfore yf we haue lerned in the ymages byfore (whiche were byneth vs and nere vnto vs) to suffer euylles paciently cruely in this last ymage which is set aboue vs we (being rauysshed in christ lyft vp and set hygher them all euylles) ought not onely to suffer theym but also to loue desyre and seke theym. And the ferther of that a man is frome this mynde & desyre the lesse he hath of Christes passion. As they which vse the sygnes and armure of Christ against euylles and deth that they might nether suffer nether dye whyche desires are clene contrary to the crosse and deth of Christ wherfore it is necessary that what euylles so euer we suffer be consumed & clene brought to nought in this seuenth ymage so that it shulde not greue vs but rather delite vs and make vs glad yf this ymage perse and entre in to oure her [...]s or do remayn and sure in oure inward desire and mynde.

This mothe haue we spoken of the fyrst table. Nowe foloweth the secunde.

TO the secunde table we shal also assygne seuē ymages contrarye to they me that were made bifore. The first shall be of the inward goodnesse. The secunde of the goodnesse to come. The thyrd of the goodnesse passed, The fourth of the goodnesse beneth vs. The fyft of the goodnesse on the lyft honde. The syxt of the goodnesse on the ryght honde. The ses venthe of the goodnesse aboue vs.

The first chapter of the fyrst ymage whiche is the goodnesse with in vs.

WHo is a bill to numbre the goodnesse whyche euery man possesseth in his owne person? fyrst howe grete are the gyftes of the bodie? as beutye streinght helt q̄cknesse witte & besydes these in the male the most p̄fai [...] & noble kynde & nature by the whyche he is mete to exercyse and take vpon hym many thinges priuate comune and other excellēt actes whiche woman is nothing mete nor apt to whathe merueyle is it yf thou vsing these giftes (thorough the fauoure of god) cenne twenty or thyrty yere with pleasure shuld suffer & be payned in one of theym for the space of tēne dayes? whate shal we do whiche haue had manye good houres and will not be cōtent to suffer one euell? here may we se howe we be endued by hepe with the goodly giftes of god. And agayn with howe fewe euylles many of vs be oppressed or touched.

Howe be it god almyghtye (not thynking it sufficiēt to haue done this moche for vs) dyd also cast vnto vs rychesse & plenteous abundaunce of all thinges though not to all men yet truely to many & to theym specially that are impotent & weake to suffer euyll for (as I sayde bifore) to theym he gyueth more of the sprete to whome he gaue lesse worldly & bodyly goodes that there shuld be a certeyn equalite in all thynges & he the ryghtuouse iuge of al thinges. Nether do grete rychesse so moche comfort a man as a mery & glad sprete. Bisides this to some he gyueth yssue & children (whiche is a grete pleasure) power imperye honour a name glory fauoure and suche other whyche yf a man vse a longe season (ye though he vse theym but a smal season) they shall sone declare vnto hym whate he shal do in a lytell euyll.

The gyftes of the soule are more excelēc then all these as witte connyng iudgemēt eloquence wysdom and these also (as he dyd the other) he deuideth after an equalyte so that he hath recompensed it in the other by gyuing theym more quietnesse and gladnesse of mynde.

In all these thynges the most liberall hond of god must be considered with gyuyng thankes and oure infirmite must be comforted that in this multitude and gretnesse of goodes we merueyl not though some sowernesse be admyxt for vnto voluptuous men there is no meate acceptable whiche of his nature hath not other some

sharpe tast or elles hys sawce prepared for hym so that contynuall and onely swetnesse is a thing intollerabill. Therfore it was well sayd euery pleasure by his perseueraunce maketh a man full of it and to disdayn it. And agayn it is said. Euen pleasure hir self is a payne: bycause this lyfe is to weke and impotent to suffre cōtinually goodnesse without the temperature of euyll for the abūdant copie of the goodnesse wherof spryngeth thys prouerbe. Theyre bones must be strong whyche shall suffer good dayes whiche prouerbe I haue often considered merueyling at the merueylous true sentence of it & howe all the purposes and desires of men are clene contrary vnto it whyche seke nothyng but good dayes ye when they haue gotte theym they can worse bere theym thē the euyll. For whāte doth god cōmend vnto vs in those thinges but that the crosse shulde be merueylous euen in the enemyes of the crosse: Insomoche that we ought to tempore and halowe all thynges by it euen as we powdre flesshe with salte that it do not putrifie & wareful of wormes werfore thē do not we receyue with a glad hert thys temperature sent of god whyche yf he dyd not sente yet oure lyfe whiche is not able to endure with thys contynuall pleasure and goodnesse wolde desire it of his owne will. Nowe we perceiue howe truely the wise mā sayed of god he that contynueth from the one ende to the other strongly and dysposeth all thynges swetely for yf we consider these good thynges it shall appere that it is also true whiche is spoken of Moses in the.

xxxij. of Deuteronomyon he bare hym Vppon hys shulders he ledde hym about and kept hym as the balle of hys eye wyth thys saying we may stoppe theyre mouthes whyche vnkyndly chatter that there are mo euilles in this lyfe them good thynges for surely we neuer lacke goodnesse nor pleasures full of proufit & swetnesse: but we do moche lacke suche people as shuld vnderstond it with the Prophete saying. The Erthe is full with the mercy of god. And agayn: the erth is full of hys prayse & in the .ciij. psal. The erth is replenysshed with thy possession thou hast delyted me Lorde in tese creatures for this cause we syng dayly in the masse: heuyn & erth are full of thy glorye why so? for there are many good thinges for the whiche he shulde be praysed but that is onely of theym whiche se this fulnesse and replenysshyng for euyn as we sayde of the euylles in the first ymage that euery mannes euyll was so greate as hys opynyon and knowelege was in it. Euen so good thynges though they come on vs on euery syde and in a maner suppresse vs yet are they no gretter them they are extemed for all that god made be verey good howe be it they be not knowen so of all men.

Of this ymage Iob gyueth vs a fayre & most proufitable example whyche (when all his goodes were taken a way) sayde yf we haue taken goodnesse of the hond of the Lorde whye shall we not also suffer euylles? truely it was a goodly sayng and a myghty comfort in temptacion for he dyd not onely suffer but was also tempted by his wife to ympacyence saying vnto hym wilt thou yet perseuer in this innocency? curse the Lorde and dye for it is manyfest that he is not god whyche so doth forsake the why them doest thou trust in hym and not rather denye hym and curse hym and so to knowelege thy selfe mortall to whome after this lyfe nothyng is remaynyng. These and suche other to euery man hys owne wyfe (whyche is sensualyte) doth prompt and shewe in temptacyon for the sense sauoureth not that thyng whyche perteyneth to god howebeit all these thinges are bodyly goodes and comen to all men. But a Chrysten man precelleth in other inwarde goodes which are farre better that is to say in the fayth of Chryst of the whyche it is spoken in the .xl. Psalme. All hys glorye is of the kynges doughter whyche is withyn in borderes of gold cumpassed about with varyete. And as we haue spoken of the euyll of the fyrst ymage that there can be sene no euyll so grete in a man but there is a moche worse in hym whiche he can not se. Euyn so the best of all the good thinges that be in a Christen he hym self can not se nor iudge for yf he dyd perceyue it he shulde be then in heuen bycause the kyngdome of heuen (as sayeth Chryste) is withyn vs for he that hath faith hath the truth and word of god & he that hath the worde of god hath god hym self the maker of all thinges. If these goodes were reuelat vnto the soule that he myght feale the botom of theym as they be in verey dede he wolde sone be dissolued from the bodye for thabundaunce of that swetnesse. wherfore all other goodes art as it were a monysshyng of those goodes (that we haue withyn vs) whiche he wolde by theyme shulde be shewed vnto vs bycause thys lyfe is not a byll to abyde the glorye of ther yf they were shewed forth. Therfore they are mercyfully hydden of god vntyll they are encreased to theyre perfit state euen as louing fathers do gyue vnto theyre chyldren sometyme lytell gyftes to play wythall wherby they may entyce the myndys of theyre chyldren to trust for gretter thynges.

Howe be it sometyme they shewe theim selfe and come forth when that the conscience (reioysing doth cōmytte hym self holly vnto got speaketh gladly of hym hereth his worde swetely & deuoutly is redy and glad to serue hym to do good workes to suffer euylles and suche other whiche all are tokens of an infinite and incōparabill

goodnesse lying with in whyche sendeth out thēse swete droppes by a lytell at ones though sumtyme it, chaunce that it be ferther reuelate to soules whyche fall to contemplacyon in so moche that they are made dronkē with it and can not tell where they are. As S. Augustine & his mother do confesse of theym selues and many other.

The secunde Chapter of the secunde ymage whiche is the goodnesse to come or byfore hym.

THey that are not Christen can take but small comfort of the goodnesse to come bycause to theym all thynges are vncerteyn for this affect whyche is called hope (by the whyche we are commaunded after mannes confortyng to trust euer for the best bithe whiche we take greate maters in honde trustyng to bryng theym to oure purposse (doth of ten tymes) ye and in a maner alweyes deceyue vs. As Chryst doth teache in the .xij. of luke of the ryche mā whiche said to his soule. I wil distroy my barnes and bylde gretter and theryn will I gadre all my frutes and all my goodes and will saye vnto my soule: Soule thou hast moche goodes leyd vp in store for many yeares take thyne ease eate drinke & be mery. But god said vnto hym: thou sole this nyght will they fetche awey thy foule agayne frō the then whose shall tho is thinges be whiche thou hast prouyded? So is it with hym that gathereth rychesse and is not ryche in god.

Nether yet hath god left the sones of men so but doth confort theym by a hole suer and perfait hope that they shall ouer come theyre euilles and obteyne goodnesse And though they be vncertein where goodnesse [...]t is that shall come yet they hope styll wythout doubt by the whyche hope they are susteyned lest (by falling ynto desperatyon) they shulde not be able to suffer theyre present euyll & so to do worse wherfore this affect of hope whiche is in temporall thinges is gyuen the of god not taht he wold haue the stykke therin but to procede vnto the hole suer and parfayt hope whiche is onely vnto hym. And for thys cause god is lūg sufferyng that be may brīg vs to repentaunce As paule sayeth in the ij. to the Romains. Nether will he suffer that all men be deceyued in this vnperfit & deceytful hope whithe is in worldly maters but that they retorne and take the parfait and vnfayned hope whiche is in hym.

There are bysides these goodes to the Christē .ij. great goodes whiche they shall suerly haue but not without deth and sufferyng for they haue also the comon hope that we spake of concernyng the fynys [...]hing of theyre present euyll & encreasing of the cō trary good although they do not so gretely regard that as they do in the increasyng of theyre owne proper good whiche is the truthe in Christ in the whiche they do procede from day to day for the wiche they do both liue and hope. But bysides these as I sayde there ys .ij. chyef whiche shall come in deth. The fyrst is that in deth is fynysshed all the tragedy of the euylles in thys lyfe as it is wryten Precio[9] is in the sight of god the deth of his sayntes. And agayn in peace I shall bothe slepe and rest. And a ryghtuous man yf he be subdewed of deth he shall be in colenesse. And contrary to theyme that are wyked deth is the begynnyng of euyll. As it is saide the death of synners is worst and euylles shall take an euell man in hys deth. So Lazarus shall be comforted whyche hath receyued here his euylles where as the gloton shall be punysshed bycause he hath receyued here his goodes.

So it feloweth that a chrysten whether he die or lyue is euer in better takyng suche a blissed thyng is it to be a chrysten and to beleue in chryst wherfore as Paule saieth To lyue it is Chryst to me and to dye it is auauntage and in the .xiiij. to the Roma. he that lyueth he lyueth to god and he that dyeth he dyeth to god whether we lyue therfore or dye we are the lordes.

This surenesse hath christ obteyned for vs bycause that he died and rose agayn that he shulde be lorde both of quykke and dede whiche was a bill to make vs sure [...] bothe in life & deth as the prophete sayeth in the, xxij. psalme: If I walke in the myddes of the shadowe of deth I will not feare euilles bicause thou art with me. And yf that this adauaūtage of deth do but lytell moue vs it is a signe that oure faith in Christ is verey weke with vs for he that doth not well exteme the pryce and value of a good deth or elles that deth is good he doth not yet beleue but is ouer moche letre by the olde adam and the wysdome of the fllesshe yet reynyng in hym we must therfore laboure that we may be promoted to knowe and loue thys benefyte of deth. It is a greate thyng that death (whiche is to other the greatest euyll) is made to vs the greatest auauntage and except that Cryst had gotten that for vs whate grete thyng had he done by gyuyng hym selfe for vs.

Truely it was a godly worke that he dyd therfore it was no merueyle to hym to make the euyll of deth most proufitable for vs Therfore deth is nowe dede to faythfull men and hath nothyng to be feared for but hys visar and outward face.

And ys euyn lyke to a serpent whyche ys kylled for he hath the ferefull shape that he had byfore howe be it yn verey dede there is nothing left but the figure the euil is dede and can do no more harme. And as in the .xxi. of

Numery God cōmaunded the brasen serpent to be lyft vp by whose sight the quykke serpentes dyd perisshe. Lykewise oure deth by the faithfull beholdyng of the deth of Christ doth perisshe and doth not nowe appere but a certeyn figure of deth. So the mercy of God hath figured all thinges to vs that are weke that he hath destroyed the power of deth and (bycause it can not be vtterly put awey) hath made it but a verey figure for the whiche cause it rather called slepe inscripture then deth.

The secunde goodnesse of deth is that it doth not onely fynisshe the euilles & paynes of this life but also (whyche is letter) it maketh an ende of all vice and synne the whiche to theym that be good faithful maketh deth moche more to be desyred then these present goodes wherof we haue spoken for the euilles of the soule (whiche are synnes) are without cōparison worse thē the euylles of the body. These onely sinnes (yf we dyd sauoure theyme) wolde make deth verey acceptable and loued vnto vs whiche thyng yf they do not it is a sygne that we do not wel perceyue nor hate the euylles of oure soule. Therfore sith thys lyfe is full of perylles and that synne doth bes [...]ge vs on euery syde and sith we can not lyue without synne deth is best and most expedient whiche loseth vs from the seperilles and cutteth synne clene awey from vs therfore in the prayse of a ryghtuouse man it is spokē in the .iiij. of Sapience. He that pleased god is made beloued & he (lyuing emong synners) is translated & rauysshed that malice shulde not chaunge his vnderstōding nether that fayning shulde deceyue his soule for the bewitching of tryfeling doth darken goodnesse & the vnstablenesse of concupiscēce doth ouerwhelme the witte wyth out malyce (O howe true these wordes are and dayly [...]ene) it is fone roted and hard to be dystroyed. But his soule pleased god and for that he hasted to bryng hym out from the myddes of iniquite. Euen so (thorough the mercy of god) deth whiche was to man the payne of synne made to the chrysten the ende of synne and the begynning of lyfe and ryghtuousnesse wherfore it is necessary that he whiche louith lyfe and ryghtuousnesse shulde not abhorre deth (whiche is the minyster & gate of theym both) but rather to loue it or elles he can neuer come to lyfe & ryghtuousnesse and he that can not loue it let hym pray god that he may. For therfore are we taught to say thy will be fulfilled because we (whiche fearing deth do rather fauoure & loue synne then iustice) of oure power be not abyl to fulfil it. And that god dyd ordeyn deth to be the destruccyon of synne it maybe gathered of this that after synne he put deth vppon Adam by and by ye byfore he cast hym for the of Paradise to thintēt to shewe vs that deth shuld worke none euyl but all goodnesse toward vs syth it was put on hym (as a penaunce and satisfaction) in paradice.

Truth it is that by the enuy of the deuil deth entered into al the worlde but in this was declared the hyghe and godly goodnesse toward vs that it was ordyned euen at his first begynnyng not to hurte vs but to be the payne and destruction of synne to oure grete proufit. This was signyfyed when be had tolde Adam byfore in the precept that what houre so euer he dyd tast of that frute he shulde dye yet after the trāgression he dyd moderate the extremyte and rygoure of the precept nether dyd he speke one syllable of deth but sayde onely. Thou art erth and shalt retourne into erth vntyll thou come ageyne into the lond [...] out of the whiche thou art taken. And (as though he had hated deth) wolde not vouthesaus ones to name it according to the Prophete layng for there is wrathe in his indignacyon and lyfe in his wyll. And semed so to speke that except deth had byn necessary to the distruction of synne he wolde neuer haue put it vpon man no nether yet haue named it. ☞ Euen so ageynst synne whiche brought forth deth the prouysyon of God dyd so arme deth that here thou mayst se fulfylled the saying of the Poete. The maker of deth dyd perisshe by his owne worke and synne was distroyed and kylled by his owne proper frute (that is to say deth) whiche he begat he hymself euen as a viper by hyr owne you frute.

This is a goodly syght to se howe deth is distroyed not by an others worke but by his owne. As Goliath had his he destroy [...]en of wih his owne swerde For Goliath was the figure of synne a terrybill gyaunt to all men except to lytell Dauid (that is to say to Christ) whiche alone dyd ouer throwe hym and cutting of his hede with his owne swerde sayde: there can not be ater swerde then Golyath hath hym selfe. If then we do remembre these ioyes of the vertue of Christ and the gyftes of his grace whate shall a lytell euyl vexe vs? syth in that great euyll to come we se so grete profites and commodytees.

The thyrd chapter of the .iij. ymage whiche is the good that is passed or behinde vs

THe cōsyderacyon of this good whiche is passed may sone be gathered by his cōtrary ymage whiche we spake last of howe be it we will helpe (in this also) hym that desyreth to loke on it. Saynt Austyne in this thing is a grete doar in his cōfessyōs where he doth wel recite the benefites of god towardes hym frō the wōbe of his mother. That doth also the excellent psalme. Lorde thou hast proued me where

emong all other he merueyling at the prouidēce of god sayeth Thou hast vnderstōd my though [...]es a farre of my path and my downe lyinges thou hast serched as though he wolde say whate so euer thing I haue thouht and what so euer I haue wrought or howe moche so euer I shulde obtayne and possesse nowe I perceyue that it is not done by my witte and polecye but that they were ordyned by thy prouisyon lōge byfore this tyme finally. Thou hast sene before all my wayes & there is no worde in my tongue. Wherin then? in thy power.

This we lerne by oure owne experience for yf we remembre oure lyfe whiche is passed shall we not merueyle that we haue thought wylled done and sayde suche thinges as we coude not se byfore? howe shulde we haue brought theyme to passe yf we had byn left to oure owne will and power? And nowe fyrst we perceyue and se that his care was so ready with vs and his prouision so cōstaunt vpon vs that we coude nether speke wyll nor thinke but that whiche he had gyuen vs. As it is spokē Sapience .vij. for in his hond are both we & oure workes. And Paule whiche worketh all thinges in all men whye then are not we (so insensyble and harde [...]arted) a shamed? whiche (thaugh by oure owne experience) do [...]e howe carefull the lord hath byn for vs vnto this day and hath gyuen vs all goodes: and yet cannot fynde in oure hertes to gyue vnto hym the same charged ouer vs in a lytell tryfill but ordre oure selfe so folishely as though he had forsaken vs or elles myght forsake vs doth not the Psalme say on this maner? I truely am [...]edy and poore the lord taketh thought for me. Saynt Austyne sayeth. Let hym take charge on the whiche made the whiche prouided for the before thou were. Howe can it be that he shall not prouide for the whiche art a man syth he prouided for the to be a mā. But thou wilt say we haue the rule of oure selfe as well as god we graunte vnto hym that he made vs (and that scarcely) but we haue in oure power the charge of oure selfe as who sayeth: he made vs & and by and by went his wey leuyng vs in oure owne power to rule and ordre oure selfe. ☞ And yf that oure wysdome and prouysyon do let vs that we can not perceyue this workyng of God whyle that par aduenture many thynges do chaunce after oure purpose yet ones turne thyne yie and loke vpon the Psalme whiche sayeth: My bone is not hyd from the whiche thou madest in secrete that is to say. Thou dydest se and facyō my bones in my mothers bely when I was not when my mother dyd not yet knowe whate was made in her and my substaunce in the neder partes of the erth that is to say the figure and facyon of my body in the lowest bowelles of my mother was not hydde frō the for thou didest make it. Whate meaneth he by these wordes? but to shewe vs by this greate example whate care god hath euer taken for vs? who can glorye that he wrought with god and holy to make him selfe in his mothers bely? Who gaue the mother charge to geue vs myske to nourisshe vs to loue vs and to exercyse all motherly dewetyes to vs when that we dyd not yet feale oure lyfe? Of this shulde we knowe nothing except we had sene it done in other and so therby beleue that we were euen so ordered, Nether shulde we haue any memory of theym that they were done to vs no more them yf they had byn done to theym that slepe ye or be deed and rather not yet borne for asmoche as concernyth oure knowelege and memory.

[Page]Here we se that without oure helpe the goodly mercyes and cōfortes be mynistred vnto vs. Do we yet doubt and dispeyre to cōmyt the cure and custody of vs vnto hī. Yf this experience do not moue & instruct man I wot not whate wyll moue him for we do se this comynly in all yong chyldren set byfore oure yies so that so many examples may make vs a shamed of oure folysshenesse and hardynesse. Yf we shulde thinke that the lyghtest good and euyll shulde chaunce vnto vs without the singular prouisyon of God. Saynt Petre sayeth. Cast all youre care to hym for he careth for you And the Psalme, Cast all thy care vpon the Lorde and he shall nourisshe the. And S. Augustyne in his cōfessyons to his soule why stōdest thou vppon thy selfe and doest not stōde? Cast thy selfe to hym he wil not plucke awey his hond that thou maist falle. And ageyn S. Petre sayeth. Let theym that suffer accordyng to the will of God commytte theyre soules to hym with well doyng as vnto a faythfull creator.

O yf any man dyd knowe his god after this maner howe suer howe quyet howe mery shulde he lyue? be truely shulde haue God knowyng surely that whatsoeuer thing do come or chaunce vnto hym it is by the dysposicyon and ordinaunce of his swete wyll. The sentence of Petre is sure and stable he caryth for you whate can we heare swetter thē these wordes? Therfore cast all youre care (he sayeth) to hym whiche yf we do not (but wyll oure self care for oure selfe) whate do we els then goo about to let the prouisyon of God? and to make also oure lyfe sadde labourouse bered with many feares cares and troubles and that in vayne for we do nothyng profit here with but as the Ecclesiastique sayeth. This is the vanyte of all vanytyes & veryng of the sprete For thorow his hole boke he speakith in experyence of this thīg whiche he hath moche laboured and attēpted for hym selfe. Howe be it in all his laboure he founde nothyng but payne vanyte and

vexacyon of the sprete so that he cō cludeth that is the gyfte of God yf a man eate drynke and be mery with his wyfe that is to say yf he lyue without care and thought and so be taketh hym selfe to god whiche caryth for all. Wherfore we ought to take none other care vpon vs but this that we take no thought for oure selfe but cōmytte and leue all oure care & thought to God. All there thinges (as I sayed) a mā may sone gather by the cōtrary ymage and by remembraunce of his lyfe passed.

The fourth Chaptre of the .iiij. ymage whiche is the good beneth vs.

HEtherto we haue cōsydered the goodes whiche are in vs and oures here after let vs exteme these goodes which are set, without vs and in other. And first theym whiche are byneth vs that is to say deade and dampned. Paraduēture ye wolde merueyle whate good thinges coude be founde in theym whiche are deade & dampned howe be it the power of the godly goodnesse is so greate in euery place that he she with vs goodnesse and his glory in the most euilles that be. Let vs cōpare theym vnto oure selfe then so we oure inestimable and infinite profites and cōmodytyes as we may also easily perceyue by the contrary ymage of euylles. For the moo euylles of death and hell we see in theym the moo profite we perceyue in vs. And the more vehement and extreme theyr euylles be the more we count oure aduauntage whiche are not lyghtly to be dispysed and set at nought for they commend to vs the hyghe and bounteous mercy of God. And the ieoperdye is lest we vnking (settyng lytell by it) be founde worthy to be dampned with theym or worse to be tormented.

Therfore the more we se theym sorowe and lament the more we ought to reioyse in oure selfe of the goodnesse of God accordyng to the sayng of Esay. Behold my seruauntes shall eate and you shall be hungry. Beholde my seruauntes shall drynke and you shalbe tristye. Beholde my seruauntes shall be mery and you shall be confounded. Beholde my seruaūtes shall prayse for the reioysyng of theyre hartes and you shall crye for the sorowe of youre hartes: and you shall howle for the contricion of your sprete and you shall put downe youre name in an other to my elect and so furth fynally as I sayde. The examples of theym that do euyll dye and are dampned as saynt Gregory doth shewe in a dialoge do profyt vs to be a monysshement and an instructyon that he may be happye whome other mennes perylles do make wise.

[Page]Truly this good (bycause it is comenly knowen) doth but litel moue vs although it ought to be numbred amōge the chyef & is of greate reputacyon to theym that haue good iugement syth that a great part of holy scripture where he speaketh of the wrath iugementes and thretenynges of God perteyne to this place. These holsome instruccyōs the examples of wretched persones do profitably cōfirme in vs whiche them chyefly be of power and efficacyte yf we put on vs the mynde of theym whiche suffer theym and cōuict oure selfe in theyre stede and place them shall they flurre vs vp and moue vs to the prayse of the goodnesse of God whiche hath kept vs from theym. Let vs also cōferre theym to God hym selfe so that we may cōfyder the iustice of god in theym. Though this he harde yet let vs go about it for syth that god is a iust iuge it is expedyent that his iustice be loued and praysed. And so then ought we to reioyse in God when he distroyeth euyll men both in body and soule for in all these thinges his hyghe and ineffable iustice she wyth hym selfe. Therfore verey helle also is full of god and hyghe goodnesse no lesse then heuen for the iustice of god is god him selfe and god is the hyghe goodnesse. Wherfore as his mercy euen so his iustice and iugement most hyghly are to beloued praysed and preached.

This ment Dauid saying the ryghtuo[9] man shall be glad when he shall se auengement he shall wasshe his hondes in the bloude of a synner. For this cause dyd the Lord forbid Samuel that he shuld no more lament Saul saying howe lōg mornest thou for Saul syth I haue cast hym downe that he shuld not reygne ouer Israel?

As though he shuld say doth my wyll so displease the that thou wilt preferre a mā nes with before myne? fynally. This is the voyce of prayse and gladnesse thorough all the Psalter that the Lord is iuge of widowes and father of fatherles chyldren that he shall auenge the pore that his enemyes shall be cōfounded the wikked shall be distroyed and many suche other. And yf that any man thorough folisshe mercy will haue pytye on that wyked bloudy nacyō and hope of infidels whiche kylled the ryghtuous ye the sonne of god by & by he shalbe founde to reioyce in theyre iniquite and to allowe and fauoure those thinges whiche they dyd and so to be verey worthy to perisshe with theim whose offences he wolde not haue punysshed. Let vs therfore heare this tex [...]. Thou [...]oest loue theym that bate the and hatest theym that loue the. A [...] Ioas sayde to Dauid when he dyd ouer moche lament his wyked son an homycyde Absalon .ij. of the kynges .xix. wherfore in this ymage we must reioyce in the pitye of holy men and in the iustice of God whiche most ryghtuously doth punisshe the pursuer & of pytye to delyuer his chosen people from theym. And so thou seyst

that there appereth not a lytle but a great deale of good in theym that are dede and dampned for in theym is aduenged all the iniuryes of the holy men and thyne also yf thou be ryghtuouse emōg theyrs. Whate merueyle is it then yf (by thy present euyll) he punysshe thyne enemye that is to say the synne of thy body? Ye thou must reioyse in this act of the most noble iustice of God whiche (though thou desire hym not) doth kyll and distroye thy mischeuous enemye that is to saye thy synne in thy selfe whiche yf thou fauoure thou shalt be founde a frende of synne and an enemye of iustice whiche worketh in the. So that thou mayst fere lest this be also spoken to the. Thou doest loue theym that hate the and hatest theym that loue the. Therfore euē as thou must reioyse with al thy hart in the iustice whiche is feerse and cruell ageynst thy synne. Euen so must thou be glad when it pursueth and punyssheth synners whiche are the enemyes of god and all good men. Thou seest no we that principall goodes appere sumtyme in extreme euylles not for the euylles but for the grete goodnesse of iustice whiche doth auenge vs,

The .v. chapter of the fyft ymage whiche is the euyll on the lyft hond.

SOme aduersaryes we haue here in this lyfe (bisides theym of whome we haue spoken in the Chaptre next before whiche are dampned and made lyke vnto fyndes) whome we must consyder with an other mynde & we shall perceyue .ij. profites that come of theym. First that they habunde with temporall goodes in so moche that the Prophetes where almost moued vnto enuy by theyre goodes as in the Psalme .lxxvij. My fete be almost moued my steppes be disparsed for I haue fauoured the wyked seyng the peace and prosperite of synners. And after Beholde the verey synners haue obteyned the abundauntry chesse in the worlde. And in Hieremye .xii. Truly lorde thou art iust yf I shulde dispute with the howe be it. I wyll speke ryghtuous thynges vnto the why doth the wey of wyked men prosper? for they are all well whiche trangresse thy cōmaundementes and lyue wykydly. Why doth he poure so many benefytes vppon theym for nothyng and leseth theym? but to cōfort vs and shewe howe good he is to theym that are ryghteuous as the psalme sayeth: he that is so good to euil howe moche more shall he be good to the good? reserued that he punissheth the euil with no vexacyon and tempteth the good with many troubles that they may knowelege hym to be good to theym not onely in these present goodes but also in the secrete goodes whiche be to come and may saye with the same Psalme it is good for me to cleue to the lorde and to put my hope in god: As though he shulde saye be it that I suffer some thinges whiche I se they suffer not yet I trust that god is moche better vnto me them vnto theym and so these visible euylles are an argumēt of inuisible goodnesse that we shuld trust for goodes inuisible and despise the euylles that we suffer: Euen as Chryst in the gospell biddeth vs to behold the foules of the ayre & the ly yes of the felde saying yf god so clothe the grasse whiche is to day in the fylde & to morowe shall be cast into the fornace shall he not moche more do the same vnto you o ye of lytell fayth wherfore by conferring the goodes with whiche the euyll abounde vnto the euylles whiche we suffer oure fayth is exercysed and oure comfort (whiche onely is holy) is stablisshed in god so that it is necessary that all thynges worke for the best vnto theym that loue god. The secunde profit (moche more merueylous) is that all theyre euilles are good vnto vs god so prouydeht for vs for although theyre offences be euyll occasyons vnto the weake yet to theim that be strong they be an exercyse of vertue an occasyon of resisting of synne and a greate meryte.

Blissed is that man whiche suffereth temptacyon for when he is proued he shall receyue a crowne of lyfe where is a greater temptacion then the multitude of myschevous examples? fynally for thys cause the world is called one of the enemyes of the elect people of god bycause that sayth hys entisementes and wicked workes he [...] reth vs vp prouoketh vs & entysith vs frō the wey of god into his wey As it is wryten in Gen .vi. The children of god dyd se the doughters of mē that they were fayre and they were made carnall. And in the . [...]xv. of Numeri The chyldren of Israell did fall with the doughters of the Moabites so that it is holsome that we euer be suppressed by some incommodyte lest that we (as they that are weke) offended by the euyll occasions of the worlde shulde fall and synne. So lot is commended of S. Petre in the secunde of his secund epistell bycause that he suffred moche euyl by the w [...] ked examples of the sodomytes and neuerthelesse contynued in his ryghtuousnesse. Necessary it is therfore that euyll occasyons be gyuen whiche shuld be the occasysion that we shuld resist synne & haue victory howe be it wo be vnto the worlde bycause of euyll occasions. Dyth then in the transgressions of other god ꝑcureth for vs so greate goodes: howe moche more ought we to beleue with al oure hart that he wil turne ouer owne offen [...]s to oure profits though the with & fleshe iuge otherwise. Nether any lesse doth the wolde profit vs by hys other euyll whiche is called aduersite for theym that he cannot, deuoure by hys entisementes nor incorporate to hym by

euyll occasions he laboureth to dryue theym from hym by troubles and passions and to vexe and inquyet theym by paynes and punysshementes euer entending other deceytes thorough the example of synne or elles to auert mennes myndee by paynes ād turmētes. Thys is the monstre thy mer a whose hede is flateryng and lyke a virgyns this belye deuouryng and lyke a lions and his taile full of deth and lyke a serpentes for the ende of the worlde bothe of pleasure and tyranny is venom and deth euerlastyng.

Therfore as in the synnes of the worlde god hath made vs to fynde profytes.

Euen so (that hys persequucyons shuld not be ydell and in vayne) they are ordeyned to vs for the encreasing of oure goodes in so moche that in that they hurt vs they are compelled to profit vs. As saynt Augustyne dothe saye concernyng the lytell chyldren whiche were killed of Herode he conde neuer haue done so greate profit & good by hys benefytes as he dyd by hys hate & enuye. And saint Agatha went reioysyng to the pryson as though she had gone to a dyner saying on this maner without thou make my body to be well handeled of thy turmentours my soule can not with victory entre into Paradyse, as the corne without he be thrust out of his huske and be strongly beten in the barne floure shal not belayd vp in the garner. But whate nede vs to speke so moche of this syth the hole scripture all the wrytinges and sayinges of the fathers and all the deades and actes of the holy men are consenting vnto thys that those thynges whyche are most noysom are most profytable to theym that beleue so that they be well suffered. As S. Petre sayeth who is he that will harme you yf ye folowe that whyche is good. And the Psalme .lxxxviij. hys enemy shall nothyng prevayle agaynst hym. And the sonne of iniquyte shall haue no power to hurte hym howe shall he not hurte hym syth that many tymes he kylleth hym. Cruely for in hurtyng hym he doth hym most profit. Therfore wese that we dwell in the myddes of goodnesse on euery syde yf we be wyse and also in the myddes of euylles. So are all thynges tempered merueylously by the hygh prouidence of the goodnesse of god.

The syxt Chapter of the syxte image whiche is the good on the ryght honde.

THis is the congregacion of holy mē the newe creature of god oure frendes and brothers in whome we se nothing but good nothyng but comforte yf we behold theym wyth a spyrytuall yie for vnto the carnall yie many tymes it appereth all otherwise as we haue declared in the contrary image of euylles. And yet these goodes whiche we seyn theym with oure carnall yie are not to be dispysed. But in these we may perceyue that we are comforted of god for the Psalme durst not presume to condempne all theym whiche possessed rychesse in this worlde saying If I dyd say thus. Behold I haue reproued the generation of thy children. If I wolde haue send that all whiche are ryche hole and honoured be euyll. I shulde haue condempned thy holy men for many of theym are [...]o Chappostell also teacheth tymothe that he commaunde the ryche men of this worlde) that they be not proude not to forbid theyme to be ryche. The scripture also doth testifie that Abraham Isaack and Iacob were ryche. And Danyell with hys companions were also honoured in Babylon. Besides thys many kynges of Iurye were ryche The Psalme therefore consyderyng theym sayeth If I did say thus: I haue reproued the nacyon of thy children. for (I say) god hath gyuen to his elect the abundaunce of these rychesse to comfort theym and other with all howe beit these are not theyre specyall goodes but they are a sygne and a shadowe of the trewe goodes whiche are feith hope cheryte and other graces and gyftes whiche all are comune by charyte.

This is the communyon of holy men in the whiche we reioyse.

And who will not here reioyse ye though he be ī great sorowes whyche doth beleue (as it is in dede) that all the goodes of holy men are his goodes and that his euyll is also theyrs. This image is most swete and pleasaunt whiche Chappostel to the Galathians .vi. doth descrybe saying bere ye one an others burthen and so fulfill ye the lawe of Christ.

Is it not good for vs to be here where yf one membre do suffer (as it is said vnto the Corinthians) all suffer with hym. If one mēbre be had in honoure all membres be glad also Therfore while I suffer I suffer not alone for Chryst and all Chrysten suffer with me. As he sayeth hym selfe he that toucheth you toucheth the ball of myne yie. Thus do other here my burthen and there vertue is myne. The fayth of the congregacyon socoureth my fearfulnesse. The chastyte of other healeth the temptacyon of my lust. The fastyng of other is myne aduauntage.

The prayers of other taketh thought for me. And to be short so all the mēbres helpe one an other that the most honest partes do couer kepe & honoure the lesse honest.

As it is well discrybed vnto the Corinthiās .xij. And a swell I may delyte in the goodes of other as in myne owne and then truely they are myne yf I be gladde and reioyse in theym. I am foule and fylthy but they whome I loue

and in whome I reioyse are faire and beutifull. By the whiche loue I do not onely make theyre goodes myne but also theym selues wherfore vnder theyre glory myne ignominie shall easyli [...]e honoured theyre rychesse shall fulfyll my pouertye. Theyre good dedes shall heale my synnes whate man can nowe dispeyre in synne? who will not reioyse in paynes? whiche nowe doth not beare his synnes or at the lest yf he beare theym he beareth theyme not alone but is holpe with so many children of god ye with Chryst hym self Suche a thyng is the communyon of holy men and the Churche of Chryst. If eny mā do not beleue that this is true he is an infidele and hath denyed Chryst & his churche: for though thys be not fealt yet it is so done ye who is he that fealeth not thys who is in the cause that thou disperyest not that thou art not ympacyent? Thy vertue na [...] truely but the feloushyppe of holy mē or elles thou were not abyll to bere the lest synne that is nor yet abyde one worde of man agaynst the so nygh is Chryst and the churche vnto the.

This is it that we say I beleue in the holy goost the holy and pure churche whate is it to beleue the holy churche but the communyon of holy? wheryn do the holy men comyn? Truely in good and euyll and all thynges. As the sacrament of Chrystes body doth figure it in brede and wine wherof Thappostle spekith saying we are one brede and one body who offendeth any lytell part of the body and hurteth not the hole? whate suffereth the ferthest part of the fote that the hole bodi suffereth not? wate benefyte is done to the feate in the whyche all the body reioyseth not. But we are one body: therfore whate so euer another sufferyth I suffer & whate so euer benefyte is done to an other it is done to me. Euyn so Chryst sayeth that whate so euer is done to one of his left is done vnto hym whate man takyng a lytell peace of breade of the altare wyll not sey that he hath taken brede or dyspysing any lytell part of hy shall not be named to dyspyse brede.

Wherfore yf we sorowe yf we suffer yf we dye let oure yie loke hytherward and let vs beleue strongly and besure that not we or at the lest not we alone: But christ also and his churche doth sorowe suffer ād dye with vs. So good is Chryst vnto vs that he wolde not the waye of oure deth shuld be solytarye whiche euery man doth abhorre: But (all the churche beryng vs companye) we entre the wey of passions and deth and the churche doth mare strongly suffer it then we do so that we may well applye vnto vs the wordes of Helyseus whyche he spake to his forefull seruaunt saying: feare not there are more with vs then with theyme. And when Helyseus had prayed he sayed Lorde open this childes yies that he may se. And the Lord opened hys yies and he dyd se and behelde a mountaynefull of horses and charettes of fyre about Helyseus we lacke nowe nothyng but to pray that oure yies may be opened and that we may fethe churche rounde about vs wyth the yies of the faith. Then haue we noting to feare. As the Psalme sayeth: Mountaynes are about it and the Lord in the compasse of his people from thys tyme present and perpetually Amen.

The seuenth Chapeter of the seuenth ymage which is the good aboue vs.

I Speake nothyng of the euerlastyng and heuynly goodes whiche the blyssed haue in the clere syght of god. Or at the lest yf I touche theyme it is in the fayth by the meanes wherof we may onely obteine theyme. But this seuenth ymage is Iesus Chryst kyng of glorye rysing frō deth euin as he was the seuenth ymage of euylles sufferyng dying and beyng buryed here may we se the hyghe and chief ioy of oure hart and goodes parmanent and stable Here is none euylles at all for Crist ones reysed from deth dyeth no more deth hath no more power ouer hym.

This is the chemney of charyte the fire of god in Syon. As Esay as sayeth cryst is borne for vs and not that onely but also gyuen vnto vs. Wherfore his resurrection is myne ye and all thynges whyche he wrought thorough his resurreccion. And as tappostell vnto the Romayns .viij. most copyously gloryeth sayng howe shall he not wyth hym gyue vs all thynges? whate wrought he by hys resurrectyon truely he dystroyed synne and raysed ryghtuousnesse confirmed deth and restored lyfe ouercame hell and brought euerlastyng glorye. These thinges are inestimable and suche as mā nes vnderstonding scarce can beleue to be gyuen vnto hym: No more then Iacob whyche (amased euē as though he had wakened out of a grete slepe when he herd sey that his sonne Ioseph dyd reygne ī Egipt) coude not beleue it vntyll they rehersyng all did shewe hym the waynes that were sent from Ioseph. So truely it had byn very harde to beleue that suche greate benefytes had byn by Iesu Chryst geuen to vs whiche were vnworthye except that bi many wordes by many wayes and apperinges he had shewed hym selfe to hys dyscyples.

So that at the last by great vse and experyence of hys shewyng and teachyng (as Iacob was by the waynes we be taught so to beleue. Truely Chryst is to vs a true and notable sygne and wayne whyche is made of god oure wisdome ryghtuousnesse sanctifyeng and redempcion. As thappostell sayeth I am a s [...]nne but I am caryed in his

rightuousnesse whiche is gyuen vnto me. I am vnclene but hys holynesse is my sanctifieng wheryn I am swetely caryed I am folisshe but hys wysdome caryeth me I am synfull and dampnabyll but hys innocency is my redempcion hys goodnesse is a sure charyot that caryeth me out of perdycion. Thus may euery Chrysten this stōding that he haue feith) bost of all the goodnesse & merites of Christ: nether nedeth he more nor lesse to reioyse in theym then yf he had done theym hym self and euen so are they hys owne. So that nowe he may ioyfully abyde the iugement of god whyche eyles were intollerable. Suche a noble thyng is faith. Suche profites is getteh for vs. Suche glorious children of god it maketh vs. Nether can we be chylder except we enheryte oure fathers goodes.

Let then euery Cristen sey with sure trust and confydence: deth where is thy victory deth where is thy stynge that is to sey synne? for the styng of deth is synne ād the power of synne is the lawe. Thankes be to god whyche hath gyuen vs the victory thorough Iesu Chryst oure Lorde fynally.

The lawe maketh vs synners And synne maketh vs subiect vnto the sentēce of deth who hath ouercome these .ij. oure iustyce? oure lyfe? nay truely but Iesus Chryst ryssing from deth [...]ondempnyng synne & deth gyuyng vs his rustyce and distributing to vs hys merytes whyche also by puttyng hys bond vpon vs hath healed vs and geuen vs power to fulfyll the lawe to ouercome deth to exile synne and to bothe chyldren of god to whome be honoure prayse and thankes wyth out measure and ende. Ammen.

Thys is the last ymage in the whyche nowe we (not onely lylt vp aboue oure euylles but also aboue oure goodes lately also sittyng in the euylles and perylles to vs purchased by the synne ād offence of an other and encreased by oure owne) nowe fitte and rest vs in the goodes gotten by the rightuousnesse of an other that is of Iesus cryst onely for vs crucfied we are iustified in his iustice and euen as he is iust & ryghtuous euen so are we that are alyed knytte and clene vnto hym by fayth This is he that hath gyuen hym self hole to vs. This is he that pleaseth god. Thys is the most chyef prest the true bysshop the good aduocate oure onely mediator that continually (neuer ceassing) in the presence of hys father prayeth for vs. And loke howe impossible it is that he in his iustice shuld not please Euen so impossible it is that we by fayth wherby we cleue vnto his ryghtuousnesse shulde not please. And bi these meanes a Chrysten is almyghty Lord of all thynges ād clene without all synne. And yf it chaunce that he falle ynto synne? yet is it necessary that they hurt not but are forgeuen for the iustyce of Christ whyche is not a bill to be ouercome whyche dryeth vp and putteth awey all synne on the whiche also oure fayth doth lene surely beleuyng that Christ is suche a one vnto vs as we haue spoken of hym and moche better then we are able to declare for he that beleueth not this knowith not Christ nether vnderstondeth whate Chryst proufiteth neither whate he is good for.

Wherfore euen this one ymage yf there were none other may encrease suche comfort in vs yf we behold it with a good ād dylygēt hert that we shall nothing be sory in oure troubles but rather (as though we felt theym not) reioyse & be glade in Chryst that we haue tribulacions with the whiche reioysing instruct vs chryst hī self oure Lordes god whiche is blissed for euer. And[324]

[324] The final page is missing.

Appendix B: A Right and Comfortable Treatise

In the past, this 1578 English edition of the *Tessaradecas Consolatoria* has been the earliest Lutheran scholars knew about. It, unlike its predecessor, does include material that would allow the reader to identify Luther as the author.

The text for *A Right and Comfortable Treatise* comes from the transcription work of Text Creation Partnership produced from Early English Books Online (EEBO-TCP).[325] Their transcription has been kindly placed in the public domain and therefore permitted its inclusion in the present work. For those interested in the finer details of the edition, such as where line and page breaks occurred, the EEBO-TCP provides access to various digital formats at their website.[326]

[325] An overview may be accessed at https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebogroup/.

[326] http://name.umdl.umich.edu/A06516.0001.001

A Right and Comfortable Treatise

Containing Sundrie pointes of consolation for them that labor and are laden.

Written by D. Martin Luther to Prince Frederick Duke of Saxonie, he being sore sicke, thereby to comfort him in the time of his great distresse.

Englished by W. Gace

Imprinted at London by Thomas Vautrollier Dwelling in the Blacke Friers 1578[327]

MARTIN LUTHER.

I Did write this booke in the beginning of my procedings, to the most gracious Prince Friderik Duke of Saxony, when he was sore sicke. Now many thought good that it should be imprinted, but when it had bene eftsones imprinted, it was so corrupted and made vnperfect, that I found many wordes wanting, which I my selfe could not coniecture what they were: howbeit the sentences I haue restored after a sort, and such as I thinke I had in the beginning. Neither haue I thought it good now to chaunge or adorne them as I could: For I will in this booke shewe a testimonie of my proceeding, and gratifie the aduersaries, that they may haue wherewith to exercise their malice. It is sufficient for me if I please my Lord Christ & his Sainctes: I reioyce from my hart, and giue thankes to my God that I am enuied and hated of the deuill and his Impes.

TO THE VVORSHIPFVLL M. HENRIE DALE CITIZEN AND MARCHANT OF THE CITIE OF LONDON, VV. GACE WISHETH GRACE AND PEACE FROM GOD THE FATHER THROUGH CHRIST IESUS OUR LORD.

MAnifold are the miseries of mans life, wherewith he is greatly grieued and sundry wayes molested, insomuch as Iob sayth that man that is borne of a woman hathe but a short time to liue, and is replenished with miserie. For he beginneth his life with teares & weeping, he passeth it with sorrow & trouble, and endeth it with dolour and payne. Wherefore it is no maruell if some haue thought that it is the best thinge not to be borne, and the next to dye quickly: and that other some haue mourned and wept at the birthes of their friendes, and solemnly reioyced at their burialls. For what could they being destitute of the light of God and true religion, see in this life but trouble & miserie? Yea the godly themselues, as they haue in all ages suffered many afflictions in this life, so haue they passed through the same as through a straunge countrie. For if heauen be our countrie, what is the earth els but a place of banishment? wherein being exiled from true de lightes and pleasures, we liue in a state vnquiet, troublesom, and many wayes miserable, as to him that shall duely consider the sundry troubles that are incident to all sortes of men in this life, wil easily appeare.

Forasmuch then as this life is so miserable, as both the Saincts of God haue pronounced of it, the very heathen haue accounted it, & daily experience proueth it, & yet neuerthelesse we, seeing God hath placed vs in it, must remaine therein till he call vs away: great neede we haue of such consolation & encouragement as may be a meane to make vs passe the time thereof without grudging &

[327] This reproduction of the text of the title page to *A Right and Comfortable Treatise* is actually that which goes to the 1579 edition.

impatiencie. For of our selues we are very fraile & weake, not able to resist, much lesse of power to ouercome, as is manifest by them, who in the time of affliction haue through impaciēcie murmured against God, albeit there both haue bene, and are many, who being not of them selues but by other meanes supported, haue patiently sustained many troubles and miseries.

Wherefore I trust that my labor shall not be thought ill bestowed, but rather profitably emploied, which I haue taken in translating this treatise into the Englishe tongue, for that it tendeth chiefly to the consolation of such as are in affliction and distresse. For that which the title of this booke portendeth, the matter thereof sufficiently proueth, namely that it containeth consolations for them that labor and are laden, that is, that suffer afflictions and troubles in this life: so that they which shall diligently read and peruse the same, may be so confirmed thereby, that when they be troubled with hardnes of aduersitie, they may not be ouercome or throwne downe therewith: when they be molested with griefe & sorrow, they may be also delited with spirituall ioy: when they be euen distressed with troubles and afflictions, they may receiue courage againe, being cheared with sundry consolations, & so patiently suffer according to Gods will whatsoeuer it shall please him to lay vpon them.

Howe great this commoditie is, it plainely appeareth not onely by this, that the feelinge of the present affliction is thereby asswaged, but by this also, that it is a meane to moue and make vs to obey Gods will, which otherwise we woulde be readye to resist, and to suffer patiently, whereas otherwise we woulde by impatiencie be stubborne agaynste the righteousnes of God.

Wherefore forasmuche as I am not ignoraunt that the crosse is vsually incident to the godly, and that through many afflictions we must enter into the kingdome of God, I am bolde to commende this treatise to all the godly in generall, to be read of them to their singular commoditie and comfort, but especially to your worshippe, whose godly conuersation both of a longe tyme hath bene, and dayly is an euident testimonie of your syncere and vnfeyned profession of Christe his religion: desiringe you to esteeme thereof, not accordinge to the quantitye or outward appearance (for then shall you make but small account of it, being both litle in quantitie, & adorned with no eloquent tearmes or glorious wordes) but according to the frute that the godly shall reape by diligent reading therof. For pearles and precious stones for the most part are in quantitie but small, and in outward appearance simple, which in value notwithstanding are great and in vertue excellent. Howbeit being sufficiently perswaded of your well accepting hereof, I will not stand vpon this point, lest I shoulde seeme in any wise to dout of it, but doe desire Almighty God, that as you haue hitherto liued in his feare, so ye may dayly increase, and constantly continue in the same euen vnto the ende.

Your vvorships at commaundement W. GACE.

TO THE MOST FAMOVS PRINCE AND LORD, THE LORD FRIDERIK, DUKE OF SAXONIE, &C, HIS VERY GOOD LORD.

OVR Lorde and Sauiour Iesus hathe left a commaundement which pertayneth indifferently to all Christians, that we should performe the duties of hu manitie, or rather (as the Scripture calleth them) the workes of mercy to the afflicted and miserable: that we should visit the sicke, endeuour to deliuer the captiues, and doe such like to our neighbour, whereby the present euills may be somewhat asswaged. Hereof our Lord Iesus Christ hath in him selfe set forth vnto vs a most manifest & singular example, wheras of his exceeding loue toward mankind, he came downe from the bosom of the father into our miseries and into our prison, that is, into our flesh and most mi serable life, and tooke the punishment of our sinnes vpon him selfe, that we might be saued: according as Esai sayth chap. 43: Thou hast laden me with thy sinnes, and wearied me with thy vngodlines, &c. If there be any whom this so manifest & singular an example doth not stirre vp, and the authoritie of Gods commaundement added therunto doth not moue to performe these workes of charitie, surely he shall worthely in the last iudgement heare the voice of the angrie Iudge: Goe thou cursed into euerlasting fire. For I was sicke and thou didst not visit me, but being altogether vnthank full for the exceeding benefits which I bestowed on thee and all the world, thou didst not euen in the most sclender duties relieue or helpe thy brethren, no not me Christ in my brethren.

Forasmuch therefore most famous Prince, as I see your Grace to be sore sicke, and that Christ also is sicke in you, I haue thought it my dutie to visit your Grace by writing somewhat vnto you. For I can not dissemble, that I doe not heare the voice of Christ our of your Graces body and fleshe crying to me, and saying: Behold I am sicke here. For these euills, namely sicknes and such like, not we Christians onely, but Christ himselfe also our Lord and Sauiour, in whom we liue, doth suffer, as he manifestly witnesseth in the Gospell: VVhatsoeuer ye doe to the least of mine, ye doe it vnto me.

Nowe although we owe this duetie to all that are sicke in generall, that we doe visit and comfort them, yet doe we owe it chiesly to them that be of the houshold of saith. For Paule doth plainely distinguish betweene aliens, and them that professe the same faith with vs, or with whome we haue some alliance. Galat. 6.

Howbeit I haue other reasons also of my duetie. For I know that I as one of your Graces subiectes, togither with the rest of your subiectes ought to be moued with your Graces sicknes, and to be as it were sicke togither with you, as the member with the head, in whom all our good estate, safetie, and prosperitie consisteth. For we acknowledge your Grace to be as a certain Naamā by whom God at this day giueth health to Germanie, as in time past by him he gaue health to Syria. VVherefore euen the whole Romane Empire hath your Graece in admiration, doth reuerence and honour you as a father of the countrie, as a singular ornament and safe gard of the whole Empire, but especially of the Germane nation.

Neither do we owe this only to your Grace, to comfort you as much as we are able, and as it were to beare the present case with you, but much rather to pray vnto God for your health and recouerie: which I hope is done with all diligence and endeuour of your Graces subiectes. As for my selfe, whom many notable benefits and pleasures haue made a dettour to your Grace more then the rest, I acknowledge that I ought by some singular duetie to declare my thankfulnes. But because in this sclendernes of abilitie and power, I am able to performe no notable thinge, D. George Spalatine, who is your Graces Chaplen, aduertized me that I shoulde doe well to make some spirituall consolation & send it to your Grace, for that that would be a thing very acceptable vnto you. VVherefore I thought it not good to doe contrary to the aduertizement of my frende, and therefore haue I gathered togither these fourteene chapters, being comprised as it were in a table, and haue intitled them Tessaradecas, that they might be in steede of fourteene Sainctes which our superstition made and called the driuers away of all euills. Howbeit this is not a siluer but a spirituall table, wherewith, not the walls of temples are to be adorned, but the godly mind is to be comforted and confirmed. And I hope that it will be very profitable to your Grace in this present state. Nowe it is diuided into two partes, whereof the former contayneth seuen considerations of euills, whereby the present griefes and troubles are mitigated and asswaged. The latter containeth likewise seuen considerations of good thinges tending to the same ende. VVherefore I desire your Grace to take this my simple labour in good parte, which I pray God ye may so enioy, that by diligent reading and consideration of this treatise ye may haue some ease. I humbly commend me to your Grace.
Your humble and obedient subiect
MARTIN LVTHER.

THE PREFACE.

THe Apostle Paul in the 15. chapter of his Epistle to the Romanes speaking of christian comfort, sayth: Brethren, VVhatsoeuer things haue ben written afore time, were written for our learning, that we through patience, and comfort of the Scriptures might haue hope. VVhereby he plainly teacheth that our comforts must be taken out of the holy Scriptures. Nowe the holy Scriptures vse two sortes of comfort, inasmuch as they commend vnto vs the consideration of two sortes of things, namely of euill things and of good things, according as the wise man sayth: In the day of affliction remember prosperitie: & in the day of prosperitie be mindful of affliction. For the holy Ghost knoweth that euery thing is of such sort & so great to man, of what sort and how great his opinion is thereof. For that which is counted vile & nothing esteemed, doth litle moue, either with loue if it come, or with griefe if it depart. VVherefore he laboureth most earnestly to call man from the opinion & affection of thinges, which vvhen he hath brought to passe, all thinges are then indifferent. Novve forasmuch as this calling is done especially by the vvorde, vvhereby the opinion is transferred from the thinge, vvhich is presently felt to the thing vvhich either is absent or not presently felt, it is by good reason that vve shall haue no cōfort but by the Scripture, which in the day of affliction calleth vs to the consideration of prosperitie, vvhich is either present or to come: also in the day of prosperitie calleth vs to consider affliction. But that these considerations may be more easie vnto vs, vve vvill diuide either of them into seuen partes. To the former shall be referred the euills vvhich are to be considered of a man: First vvithin him selfe: Secondly before him: Thirdly behind him: Fourthly beneath him: Fiftly on the left hande: Sixtly on the right hand: Seuenthly aboue him.

THE FIRST CHAPTER OF THE FIRST CON

sideration, which is of the inward euil.

THis is certaine and moste true, whether man beleeue it or not, that there can be none so great trouble & veration in man, which is the worst of the euills which are in him, so many moe and greater euils are there in him then which

he feeleth. For if he felt his euill, he should feele euen hell: for he hath hel in him self. Doost thou demaund, how? The Prophet sayth: All men are lyars. And againe: Euery man liuing is altogither vanitie. Now to be a lyar and vaine is to be voyd of veritie, & not to be in deed: but to be without veritie, and not to be in deede, is to be without God, and to be nothing: and this is to be in hell, and to be condemned. Therefore God mercifully chastening vs, openeth vnto vs and layeth vpon vs the smaller & lighter euils, knowing, that if he should bring man to ye know ledge of his euill, he should forthwith perish in a moment: howbeit he hath giuen it to some to haue a feeling and taste of it, of whome it is sayd: He bringeth downe to the graue, and fetcheth vp againe. Wherefore they say rightly who cal corporal sufferings certaine aduertizements of the inward euill. And the Apostle Heb. 12 calleth them ye fatherly chastenings of God, saying: He scourgeth euery sonne that he receiueth. Which he therefore doth, that by these scourges and small euills he may expell those great euills, least we should at any time feele them, as it is sayd Prouerb. 22: Foolishnes is bound in the hart of the child, and the rod of correction shall driue it away. Are not godly parents also more grieued by their childrē if they be theeues or euill, then if they be wounded? yea they doe them selues beat and wound them that they may not be euill.

What therefore is the cause that this very euil is not felt? truely as I haue said, God disposing it it commeth so to passe, that man may not be vtterly discouraged, if he should see his most inward euils. For God hideth them, and will haue them seene by only faith, while he sheweth them by the euill that is felt. Therefore in the day of affliction or when thou sufferest euil thinges, remember good thinges: consider howe great a good thinge it is not to know all the euill, be mindfull of this good thinge, and the euil which thou feelest shal lesse disquiet or trouble thee. So againe in the day when thou enioyest good thinges, remember euill things, that is, while thou art not grieued with those that be very euills in deede, in this want of griefe be thankefull, and remember the very euills, then will it come to passe that thou shalt lesse feele the euill that is felt.

It is manifest therefore that the want of griefe is alwayes greater in man in this life, then griefe, not for that the whole euill is not present, but because there is no opinion or affection thereof by the goodnes of God, who hideth it. Hereupon we see them to whom it is giuen to behold their very euill, howe rigorous and cruell they are against them selues, howe they count it nothing whatsoeuer they can suffer in their whole life, so as they feele not their hel. So would euery one doe, if he either felt or firmely beleeued his inward eeuill: he would of his owne accord call for outward euills, he would sport in them, & would neuer be more sad or sorrowfull, thē when he had no euills, as we know some of the Sainctes to haue done.

Wherefore in the first comfortable consideration, a man may say to him self: thou doost not yet, O man, feele thine euill, reioyce and giue thankes, that thou art not compeld to feele it: and so a small euil being compared with one that is very great, shall be made light and easie. This is that which some saye: I haue deserued farre worse things, yea euen hel it selfe: an easie thing surely to be spoken, but intolerable to be felt. And this euil albeit it be hid, yet doth it shew forth his frutes sufficiēt grieuous: these are feare and the vncertainty of a trembling conscience, whereby faith is impugned, whiles man knoweth not or douteth whether he hath God fauorable vnto him, which frute is so much more bitter as faith is weaker. And this only infir mitie being wel weyed, forasmuch as it is spiritual, is farre more grieuous then that of the body, which it doth make euen most light, being diligently compared vnto it.

Beside these, to the inward euils pertaineth all that tragedy, which the Preacher describeth, whereas he so often maketh mention of vanitie and affliction of the spi rit. For how many counsels doe we take in vaine? how many of our desires are frustrate? how many thinges doe we see, how many things do we heare which we would not? Euen those thinges which tende to our desire, fall out contrary to our desire, so that there is nothing entire and perfect. Moreouer all these thinges are so muche greater as one is placed in higher place or state, who must needes be rost with farre more and greater sourges, waues, & tem pests, then the rest that are troubled with the same thinge, so that the 103. Psalme sayth well: small and great beastes, and thinges creeping innumerable, are in the sea of this worlde, that is, infinite sortes of tentations, wherefore Iob chap. 7. calleth the life of man a tentation. Now these are not therefore no euils because they are litle felt, but because through vse and daily custome they are nothing accounted of, and affliction & opinion in these is worne out, by the worke of God: wherefore those that be rare doe rather moue, which as yet we haue by no vse learned to contemne. So that it is true, that we doe feele scarce the thousandth part of our euills: it is also true that out euills are measured, felt, or not felt, not by the veritie of the thinge, but by our opinion and affection.

The second chapter of the second consideration, which is of the euill to come or before a man.

The second chapter of the second consideration, which is of the euill to come or before a man.

IT will not a litle lighten euery present euill, if thou turne thy mind to them that are to come, which are so many, such, & so great, that hereunto alone is referred that great and one of the principall affections which is called feare, which some define to be an affection of the euill to come, according as the Apostle saith Rom. 11: Be not hie minded but feare. This euil is so much greater, as it is more vncertaine, of what sort and how great it wilbe when it come, so that it is a common saying: There is no age to whom ye scabb may not come, which notwithstanding is an euill that is wont to happen to children and infants. So that no man is free and exempt from any euills of any man, but whatsoeuer one man suffereth, the same also may an other suffer.

This is verified by the histories & tragedies of all ages, by all the complaints of the whole world: by more then three hundred sorts of diseases, whereby mans body may be troubled, as some haue well noted. If there be so many diseases, how many other il chaunces thinkest thou wil there be of other thinges, of frendes, finally of the minde it selfe, which is the principall subiect of all euills, and the onely receptacle of sorrow and euills?

Moreouer the force & feeling of euils is so much more increased, by howe much the state is greater & more worthy, whē as pouertie, ignominie, & all il chaunces, seeing that they may euen sodenly come, must needes, forasmuch as all thinges hange as it were by a sclender thread, be feared euery howre, no otherwise then that sworde, which Dionyse the tyran hoonge ouer the head of his guest. Now whatsoeuer of these do not come, it is to be counted for aduasitage, & for no smal cōfort against that euill that chaunceth, so that thou art here compelled to say with Ieremie: it is through the mercies of ye Lorde that we are not destroyed. For whatsoeuer of them doth not chaunce, it chaunceth not, the right hand of ye Highest letting or prohibiting it, which mightely preserueth vs on euery side as it is declared in Iob, so that Satan and euils doe euen grudge and beare it vnpatiently that they are letted and prohibited. Wherfore we see, how sweetely the Lord is to be loued, as often as any thing chaunceth vnto vs, forasmuch as by this one euil our most louing father admonisheth vs to consider howe many euils are ready to assaile vs, if he did not stay and let them: as if he sayd: Satan and a huge heape of euills desire to sifte thee: but I haue set boundes to the sea, and haue sayd vnto it, hitherto shall thy swelling waues come, and here shall they stay, as he sayth in Iob chap. 28. But none of them shall come, perhaps the will of God being so: howbeit that which of all terrible things is sayd to be the greatest, namely death, shall most certainely come, and nothing is more vncertaine then the hower thereof. Which euil is so great, that we see that many men had rather liue euen with all the foresayd euils, then they being ended to dye once. And to this one the Scripture also, wheras it contemneth the rest, referreth feare, saying: Remember the end and thou shalt neuer do amisse.

Consider how many meditations, howe many bookes, how many meanes and remedies are ordained hereunto, so that with the remembrance of this onely euill it is vsual to fray men from sinnes, and make the world contemptible, to lighten sufferings and euills, and to comfort the afflicted by comparing their euills with so horrible & great an euill, which shall at one time or other of necessitie come. There is no man, who would not wish to suffer all euills, if thereby he might auoide the euill of death. This the Sainctes also haue feared: this Christ suffered with feare and sweat like dropps of blood. So that the diuine mercy hath bene careful to strengthen & comfort the weake & faint harted in nothing more then in this euill as we shall see hereafter.

As for Christians they haue a speciall and proper cause to feare the euill to come, which exceedeth all the other euils: this is that which ye Apostle setteth forth I. Cor. 10. saying: Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heede lest he fal. So slipperie is the way, so mighty is the enemy, being armed with our owne proper strength (that is, with the aydes of the flesh & of all euill affections) accompanied wt infinite hands & companies of the world, with delights & pleasures on the right hand, with troubles & the euil wils of men on ye left, beside that art, a thousand wayes to hurt, seduce, & destroy, whereof he is most kilfull. We liue so that we are not sure of our good purpose so much as a moment. Cyprian speaking of many such things in his epistle of mortalitie, teacheth that death is to be wished as a speedy helper to auoyde these euils.

And for the most part where men haue a good hart, & duely reuolue in their minde these infinite perils, we see them, despising life and death, that is all the aforesaide e uills, wish to be losed, that they may be also losed from this euill of sinnes wherein they are, as we haue sayd in the first chapter, and into which they may fall, whereof we speake nowe. And surely these are two most weighty reasons, to moue vs not onely to wish for death, but also to contemne all euills, not to beare one euil onely lightly, if the Lorde shall giue to any to be moued with them, for it is the gift of God to be moued with them. For what true

Christian will not wish euen to dye, and not only to be sicke, who seeth and feeleth, that he while he liueth in healthe, is not onely in sinnes, and continually may and daily doth fall into moe, and so without intermission doth contrary to the moste louing will of his most louing Father? With this vehemencie of indignation Paule beinge moued (as it is declared Rom. 7.) when he had complayned that he did not the good which he woulde, but the euill which he would not, cryed out: O wretched man that I am, who shall deliuer me from the bodye of this death? The grace of God sayth he by Iesus Christ, &c. He litle loueth God his Father, who doth not choose rather the euill of death, then this euill of sinning, seing that he hath ordayned death hereunto that this euil may at the last haue an ende, and death may be the minister of life and righteousnes, whereof shal be spoken hereafter.

The third chapter of the third consideration, which is of the euill past or behind vs.

HErein more then in ye rest notably shineth the sweete mercye of God the father, which is able to comfort vs in all our distresse. For euery man neuer feeleth the hand of God more present vpon him, then when he calleth to minde the yeares of his life past. Sainct Augustine saith: If a man should choose either to dye, or to leade againe his life past, he would choose rather to die, considering so great perills & euils, which he hath scarce and hardely auoided. Which saying is most true, if it be well & duely weyed. For here a man may see, how often he hath without his owne studye, without his owne care, yea without and contrary to his desire, done and suffered many thinges, whereof he did not so much as thinke before they were done, or in doing, that the worke being ended, he is then first compelled to say: Howe hath it come to passe that I haue done these thinges, which I did not thinke on, or thought of other thinges? so that the prouerbe is true: Man purposeth, but God disposeth, that is, altereth, and bringeth to passe an other thinge then man purposeth, that euen in this one thinge we can not denie, that our life and actions are gouerned & directed, not by our owne wisedom, but by the maruelous power, counsel, & goodnes of God. Hereby we perceiue howe often God hath bene wt vs, when we neither saw nor felt it, and how truely Peter sayd: Cast all your care on him, for he careth for you.

Wherfore if there were no bookes nor sermons, yet our life it selfe led through so many euills and perills, if it be well considered, doth abundātly commend the goodnes of God to be present with vs, & most sweete vnto vs, who hath farre otherwise then we either thought or felt, borne vs as it were in his bosome, and as Moses sayth Deut. 32: The Lord hath kept him as the apple of his eye, he hath led him about, and caried him on his shoulders. And hereunon came those sayinges in the Psalter: I remember the time past, I meditate in all thy works, yea I do meditate in the works of thy handes: I will remember the wonders of olde: And againe: I remembred thy iudgements of old, and haue bene comforted. All these and such like tende to this ende, that we should knowe, that if we see that God was then present with vs, when we did not thinke thereof, neither he did seeme to be present, we shoulde not doubt that he is nowe also present, when he seemeth vnto vs to be absent. For he that protected and preserued vs in many necessities without our owne care or thinkinge thereof, he I saye will not forsake vs in a small matter although he seeme to forsake vs, according as he sayth in Esai: A litle while haue I forsaken thee, but with great mercifulnes shall I take thee vnto me. Hereunto thou mayst adde: Who hath had care of vs so many nightes when we slept? who was carefull for vs as often as we labored, plaied, and did infinite other things, wherein we were nothing carefull for our selues?

So we see how al our care, whether we will or no, must be referred to God alone, we being very seldom left to our owne coūsell or care, which notwithstanding ye Lord sometime doth, that he may teach vs to acknowledge his goodnes, that we may perceiue howe muche difference there is betweene his care and ours. Wherefore he sometime suffereth some light sicknes or other euil to come vnto vs, making semblance yt he hath no care of vs (for in deede there is no time whē he careth not for vs) notwithstanding he doth in the meane season prohibit & let, that so many euils as are ready to assaile vs, do not together on euery side come violētly vpon vs, that he may try vs as most deare children whether we will commit our selues to his care being knowne of vs through all ye rest of our life, & marke how vnprofitable & impotent our owne care is. For what doe we profit our selues, or what cā we profit our selues in al our life, who in a litle while can not cure & remedie one onely payne of the legge?

Why then are we so careful in the point of one perill or euill, and doe not leaue the care to him, when as our life it selfe being witnes, we are kept and preserued in so many euills without our owne labour or trauel? To know & duely to consider these things, is to know ye works of God, to meditate in his workes, & by ye remembrance of them to be comforted in aduersitie and troubles: But they that

are ignorant hereof shall fall into that which is mentioned Psal. 29. Because they haue not vnderstood the workes of the Lord, nor the operation of his handes, thou shalt breake them downe, and not build them vp. For they are vnthankful for all the care which God hath taken for them in all their life, who do not commit the care of them selues to him for a litle while.

The fourth chapter of the fourth consideration, which is of the euill beneath vs.

AS yet we haue seene no other in all the euills which we suffer, but that ye goodnes of God is so great, and so present with vs, that among innumerable euills, where with we are compassed in this life, & wherin we are euen imprisoned, scarce a very few, and those not at all times are suffered to assaile vs, so that euery present euill wherewith we are troubled, is but an aduertizement of certaine great aduauntage, which we haue through the goodnes of God, whiles that he suffereth vs not to be oppressed with ye multitude of euills wherwith we are compassed. For it is a miracle, if one be assailed with infinit blowes, & be touched but with one alone, yea it is a grace that he is not stricken with all, a miracle that he is not stricken with many.

Nowe the first of the euills that are beneath vs, is death, the second, hell. If we consider the shamefull and vile death of others, wherewith sinners are punished, we shall easily perceiue with howe great aduauntage we suffer lesse then we haue deserued. For how many are hanged, drow ned, or stricken with the sword, which perhappes haue done farre lesser sinnes then we, so that their death and miserie is sette before vs of Christ as a glasse, wherein we maye see what we haue deserued: as Luke 13. when certaine shewed him of the Galileans, whose bloode Pilace had mingled with their sacrifices, he aunswered: suppose ye that these Galileans were greater sinners then the other Galileans, because they haue suffered suche thinges? I tell you, nay: but except ye amend your liues, ye shal all likewise perish. Or thinke you that those eighteene, vpon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slue them, were sinners aboue all men that dwell in Ierusalem? I tel you, nay: but except ye amend your liues, ye shal all likewise perish. For we may not thinke that lesser euils are due vnto vs, who haue committed greater or like sinnes. Neither will the iustice and truth of God be vniust & false for vs, who hath determined to giue to euery man according to his deedes.

Moreouer, in hell, & eternal damnation howe many thousand are there, who haue not committed the thousandth part of our sinnes? how many virgins are there, children, & they whom we call innocents? how many religious men, Priestes, &c. who in their whole life semed to serue God, & perhapps through some one fall are punished for euer? Here must be no dissembling: the iustice of God is ye same in euery sinne, he hateth & condemneth sinne alike in whomsoeuer it be found. Doe we not here see the inestimable mercy of God, which hath not condemned them who haue so often deserued it? Howe muche, I praye you, is it which we can suffer euen in all our life, in respect of the eternall punishment, which they suffer hauing deserued it perhaps by one offence, we in the meane time being free, and saued from many sinnes which God passeth ouer and remitteth? Whereas we do not regard these benefits of God, or make light accoūt of them, it is through vnthankfulnes & a certaine senseles hardnes of incredulitie.

Hereunto moreouer are to be referred so many Infidels, Gentiles, Iewes, vnto whom if those things had ben giuen which are giuen to vs, they had bene, not in hell, but in heauen, and had farre lesse sinned. Examples hereof Christ setteth before our eyes Matth. II. saying: Wo be to thee Corazin: Wo be to thee Bethsaida: for if the greate workes which were done in you, had bene done in Tyrus and Sidon, they had repented long agone in sackcloth & ashes: but I say to you, it shalbe easier for Tyrus & Sidon at the day of iudgement, then for you. And thou Capernaum which art lifted vp vnto heauen, shalt be brought downe to hell: for if the greate workes which haue bene done in thee, had bene done among them of Sodom, they had remained to this day: but I say vnto you, that it shal be easier for them of the land of Sodom in the day of iudgement, then for thee. We see therefore what great praise & loue we owe to our most gracious God, in euery euill of this life, for that we cast scarce of one drop of them which we haue deserued, which Iob compareth to the sea, and to the sande of the sea.

The fift chapter of the fift consideration, which is of the euill on the left hand.

HEre we must set before our eyes that great companie of aduersaries and euill men, * 6.17 & in them we must first consider, that they haue not done that euil to our body substāce, fame, soules, which they would haue done, but that God did stay and let them: and the higher calling and state that one is placed in, to so many more deceits, subtle deuises, sclaunders and troubles of the aduersaries is he

subiect, in all which he may perceiue & feele the present hande of God. What maruell is it then if we be sometime touched with some one?

Secondly their owne euills are to be considered of vs also, not that we should reioice at them, but that we should haue compassion on them. Nowe they also are subiect to all the same euils, whereunto we are subiect, as it may be easily perceiued by the former cōsiderations. Howbeit herein they are more miserable then we, that they are out of our societie, as well corporall as spiritual. For this euil which we suffer is nothing in comparison of that, that they liue in sinnes, in infidelitie, vnder the wrath of God, vnder the dominion of the deuil, most miserable slaues of vngodlines and sinne, so that if the whole worlde shoulde curse them, it coulde wishe them no worse. All which if we doe throughly perceiue, we shall also perceiue, with how great fauour and blessing of God we, liuing in faith, in the kingdome of Christ, in the seruice of God, do suffer some litle euill of the body, which in so great plentie of most excellent thinges, should not be so much as felt: yea their miserie ought to be so grieuous to him that hath a Christian and godly hart, that he should thinke his owne griefes delightes. For so Paule willeth Philip. 2: Looke not euery man on his owne things, but euery man on the things of other men. Let the same minde be in you, that was euen in Christ Iesus, who being in ye forme of God, tooke on him the forme of a seruaunt, &c. That is, with most louing affection he tooke on him our forme, behauing him selfe no otherwise in our euills, then if they had bene his owne, so, as it were forgetting his owne good thinges, and making him selfe of no reputation, that he might be found altogether made like vnto men, refusing to be subiect to no humane thinge, being occupied onely in our euills.

The Saincts being animated by this affection, and by this example stirred vp, are wont to pray euen for the euills of their enemies, & to do all things according to the example of Christ, & forgetting their owne iniuries or righteousnes, to be careful how they may deliuer them from their euills, wherwith they are wtout comparison more troubled then wt their owne, as Peter writeth of Lot 2. Pet. 2, who dwelled among them, which vexed his righteous soule from day to day wt their vnlawfull deedes.

Thou seest therefore how deepe a pit of euils here appeareth, & that we haue occasion to take pity and compassion, & to forget our owne small euil, if the loue of God be in vs: thou seest also how litle God permitteth vs to suffer in respect of those thinges which they suffer. * But whereas these things do litle moue vs, the cause is, for that the eye of the hart is not sufficient cleare, whereby we should see how great ye ignominie and miserie of man is lying vnder sinne, that is, being separate from God & in subiection vnder the deuill. For who is so harde harted, which is not greatly moued with pitie and compassion at the miserable sight of them that lye in the porches of Churches, & in the streetes, their faces being gnawne, their noses and eyes eaten with corruption, and their other members wasted with filth and rottennes, so that the mind detesteth to thinke therof, much lesse can ye eie abide to behold it. But what doth God intend and purpose by these miserable creatures, who haue like flesh as we haue, & are our brethrē like vnto vs, but that he may open the eies of our mind, whereby we may see in how more oughly a sort the filth and corruption of the soule of a sinner appeareth, albeit he weare purple and gold, roses & lillies, as though he were a child of Paradise. But how many sinners are there in the world, to one of them whose bodies are full of sores?

Now these euills which are infinite as well in greatnes as in multitude, being contemned or not regarded in our neighbours, this contempt is the cause that our owne euill being euen one of the least sort, seemeth vnto vs to be very great, and that we thinke that no other are troubled with the like. But it must needes be that euen in outwarde euills also they are in worse case then we. What, I pray you, can be delightfull or throughly pleasant vnto them, albeit they haue and enioy all thinges that they desire, when as their conscience can not be quiet? Is there a more grieuous euill then the trouble of a stinging conscience? For Esai sayth chap. 57: The wicked are like the raginge sea that can not rest, whose water someth with the myre and grauell: euen so the wicked haue no peace sayth God. Wherefore thou mayst see that verified in them which is written Deut. 28: The Lord shall giue thee an vnquiet hart, and dasing eyes, and sorrowe of mind, and thy life shal hange in dout before thee: thou shalt feare both day and night, and shalt haue none assurance of thy life. In ye morning thou shalt say, Would God it were night: and at night thou shalt say, Would God it were morning, for feare of thine hart wherewith thou shalt be terrified, and because of those things which thou shalt see with thine eyes.

Briefly, if one did with due affection see and consider all the euills of euill men, cither of enemies or frendes, he woulde not onely forgette his owne euills, and seeme vnto him selfe to suffer nothinge, but also with Moses and the Apostle Paule earnestly wishe that he might dye for them, and be rased out of the booke of life, and separate from Christ, as it is written Rom. 9, that they might be

deliuered. Christ burning with this zeale and inflamed affection died for vs, and descended into hell, leauing vs an example, that we also should be so carefull for the euills of others, forgetting quite our owne, yea desirous of our owne.[328]

The sixt chapter of the sixt consideration, which is of the euill on the right hande.

ON the right hande are our frendes, by whose euills S. Peter teacheth that our euil may be mitigated, I. Pet. 5: Resist the Deuill, sayth he, stedfast in the fayth, knowing that the same afflications are accomplished in your brethren which are in the world. The Church also desireth in her prayers, that being prouoked and stirred up by the examples of the Saincts, it may imitate the vertue of their patient suffering, & singeth after this sort, Howe great torments haue all the Sainctes suffered, that they might attaine safely to the victorie of martydom?

By which words & singing of ye Church we understand, that the feastes, memories, and names of Sainctes are celebrated for this cause among other, that we may be stirred up and encouraged to beare ye same euills which they haue born. By which meanes if they be not worshipped, al other kind of worshipping them can not be without superstition, as there be many who celebrate these things, that they may not suffer the euil which the Sainctes by their example & memorie teach to be suffered, & yet they may be unlike them, whose feasts they haue tha tthey may becaome like unto them.

But the Apostle doth most excellectly of all handle this place of comfort in the 12. chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, saying: Ye haue not yet resisted unto blood, striuing against sinne: & ye haue forgotten the consolation, which speaketh unto you as unto children: My sonne, despise not the chastening of the Lord, neither faint when thou art rebuked of him. For who the Lord loueth, he chasteneth: & he scourgeth euery sonne that he receiueth. If ye endure chastening, God offereth him self unto you as unto sonnes: for what sonne is he, whom the Lord chasteneth not? If therefore ye be without correction whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sonnes. Moreover me haue had the fathers of our bodies which corrected us, & we gaue the reuerence: should we not much rather be in subiection unto the father of spirits, yet we might liue? Now no chastising for ye present seemeth to be ioyous, but gracuous: But afterward it bringeth the quiet frute of righteousnes vnto them which are thereby exercised. Thus much sayth Paule.

Who would not be terrified with these wordes of Paule, where he expresly affirmeth, that they are not the sonnes of God, which are without the correction of God? And who can be more strongly confirmed, & more effectually comforted, then he that heareth that they are loued of the Lorde which are chastened of him, that they are sonnes, that they haue communion with all the Sainctes, and that not they alone doe suffer? This vehement exhortation is able to make chastening and correction euen amiable and to be loued. Neither is here any place for excuse, for that some doe suffer lighter euills, some those that be more grieuous, for euery one is tried according to measure, not aboue his strength, as it is sayd Psal. 80: Thou shalt feede them with the bread of teares, and giue them teares to drinke with measure. The same Paule also sayth: God is faithfull, which will not suffer you to be tempted aboue that you be able, but will euen giue the issue with the tentation, that ye may be able to beare it. Where therefore there is a greater euill, there are more meanes to escape out of tentation, and more helpe, so that the inequalitie of suffering is rather in appearance then in very deede.

Doth not the example of Iohn Baptist, whose feast we celebrate at this day that he was beheaded of Herode, greatly amaze vs all, that so great a man, then whome a greater hath not risen amonge them that are begotten of women, the speciall friend of the bridegrome, ye forerunner of Christ, greater then all the Prophets, that such a one I say, was not put to death at the least by publike iudgement, was not at the least accused of some fayned crime, as Christ was, nor for the peoples sake, but at the request of the daughter of an harlot which had daunced before Herode, was beheaded in the prison? The ignominious death of this one Sainet; and his life so vilely and after so vnworthy a sort yeelded vp into the handes of a moste malitious and cruell adulteresse, ought to lighten and asswage all our euill. Where was God here, who might see such things? where was Christ, who hearing this, did quite hold his peace? He dieth as though he were vnknowne vnto God, men, and all creatures. What doe we suffer, wherein, I will not say we may boast, but not at al be troubled, if it be compared to the death of this man? Or where shall we appeare, if we wil suffer nothing, when as so great men do vndeseruedly suffer so shamefull and ignominious death, and their bodies are mocked and

[328] Here 2 pages are missing from the 1578 edition. The text has been supplimented with a 1579 printing (London: Thomas Vautrollier) until the words "…terward it bringeth the quiet frute of righteousnes…"

scorned of their enemies after their death? Behold, sayth the Lord in Ieremie, they that men thought were vmneete to drinke of the cup haue drunke with the first, & thinkest thou then to be free? No no, thou shalt neither be quit nor free, but thou must drinke also.

Rightly therfore did that Eremite, who when he had bene sicke euery yeare, being at the last one whole yeare in health, was very sorrowfull, and wept bitterly, saying that God had forgotten him, & denied vnto him his grace. So necessary and wholsom is the chastising of the Lorde to all Christians.

Wherefore we shal see that it is litle or nothing which we suffer, if we cōsider how the Sainctes were thrust vnder the nayles with sharpe pricks, how they were imprisoned, slaine with the sword, burned, torne in peeces wt wild beasts, & suffered infinite tormēts: yea if we doe but wey ye tentations of them which are present wt vs in this life, and suffer most grieuous persecutions of the deuill. For there are which suffer more sharpely and grieuously then we doe, as well in spirit as in body.

Some say here: This I lament, that my suffering is not comparable to the sufferings of the Saincts, because I am a sinner, & not worthy to be compared wt them. They suffered for their innocencie, I suffer for my sinnes, wherfore it is no maruell if they suffered all things cheerefully. This is a very vnwise saying. For if thou suffer for thy sinnes, thou must reioyce, that thy sinnes are scoured: were not ye Saincts also sinners? But fearest thou that thou art like Herode & the theefe on the left hande? Thou art not, if thou be patient: for what made difference betweene the theefe on the left hand and him on the right, but patience in faythe? If thou be a sinner, well, the theefe was a sinner also, but by patience he attained to the glory of righteousnes and sanctitie: which that thou maist doe, doe likewise as he did. For thou canst not suffer but thou shalt suffer either for sinnes, or for righteousnes: either suffering doth sanctifie and make blessed, if thou loue it, and suffer in faith: wherefore there is no excuse remaining. Finally as soone as thou hast faithfully confessed that thou doest suffer iustely for thy sinnes, thou art righteous and holy, as the theefe on the right hande. For the confession of sinne, inasmuch as it is of faith, doth iustifie and make holy, and so in a moment after suche confession thou doost not suffer for sinnes, but for innocencie: for he that is righteous doth not suffer but innocently: but thou art become righteous after faithfull confession of thy worthy suffering, and of thy sinnes. Wherefore thy suffering may truely and worthely be compared to the sufferinges of the Sainctes, euen as thy confession of thy sinnes may truely and worthely be compared to the confession of them: for there is one faith of all, one confession of sinnes, one suffering of euils, and one true communion of Saincts in all and through all.

The seuenth chapter of the seuenth consideration, which is of the euill aboue vs.

LAstly we must lift vp our hart on hie, & ascend vp the mountaine of myrre with the spouse. Here is Iesus Christ crucified, the head of all the Sainctes, the chiefe of all that suffer. The memory of him is commended to the spouse, where it is sayd: Set me as a seale vpon thine hart, & as a signet vpon thine arme. The blood of this lambe beinge striken on the postes, suffereth not the angell the destroyer to approch. Hereof is the spouse commended, that her heare is like purple (that is, her meditation is red by the memorie of Christes passion.) This is the tree which Moses was commaunded to cast into the waters of Marah, that is, bitter passions, & they were made sweete. There is nothing that this passion doth not make sweete, euen death, as the spouse sayth: His lippes are like lillies, that droppe pure myrrhe. Nowe concerning this likenes of lillies and lippes, forasmuch as these are red, & those are white, surely she speaketh mystically, that the words of Christ are most gentle and pure, wherein is no cruell bitternes or spite, but are sweete and mylde, which notwithstanding droppe and perswade pure and prin cipall myrre (that is most bitter death.) These most pure & sweete lippes are able to make most bitter death (which as pure myrre taketh away at once all the stincke of sinne) sweete, mild, gentle, & acceptable. How shal this come to passe? Euen while thou hearest that Iesus Christ the Sonne of God, hath by his most holy suffering consecrated & made holy all passions, euen death it self, hath blessed malediction, hath glorified ignominie, hath enriched pouerty. So that death is compelled to be ye gate of life, malediction the beginning of blessednes, ignominie the way to glory. Now how canst thou be so hard harted & vnthākful, that thou wouldest not euen wish for & loue all the passions which by ye most pure and holy flesh and blood of Christ are sanctified, made harmeles, wholsom, blessed and happy vnto thee?

For if by the touching of his most pure flesh he hath sanctified all waters to baptisme, how much more by the touching of ye same his most pure flesh and blood, hath he sanctified all death, all sufferings, all iniuries, all sclaunders, all ignominie to ye baptisme of the spirit or blood? as he sayth of the same baptisme of suffering Luke

12: I must be baptised wt a baptisme, & howe am I grieued till it be ended? Thou seest how he is disquieted, how he is grieued, how he thirsteth to sanctifie & make amiable, passions & death. For he saw that we were ter rified wt passions, he saw that we did greatly feare & dread death. Therfore as a most louing shepeheard, and faithfull phisition, minding to moderate this euil, he maketh hast & with griefe desireth to die, & by suffering to commēd the same vnto vs. So that the death of a Christian is to be counted like the brasen serpent that Moses set vp, which in euery respect resembled ye forme of a serpent, but was wholy without life, without motion, without venim, without stinging: so the righteous seeme in ye eyes of the vnwise to die, but they are in peace. We are like to them that die, neither doth our death appeare any otherwise then the death of others, notwithstanding it is an other thinge, for death is deade vnto vs. So also all our other sufferinges are like the sufferings of others, howbeit in appearance onely, but in very deede our sufferings are the beginnings of rest, as death is the beginning of life. And this is that which Christ sayth Iohn 8: If a man keepe my worde he shall neuer see death. Howe commeth it to passe that he shall neuer see it? because he dying, beginneth to liue, so by reason of the life which he seeth, he can not see death. For here the night shineth as the day, for that the light of the life beginning is more cleare, then of the death ending. These thinges are certaine to all them that beleeue in Christ, but to them that doe not beleeue they are other wise.

Wherefore if thou wouldest kisse, loue and embrace the coate of Christ, the vessells, waterpots, and whatsoeuer thinges Christ hath touched, and which he hath vsed, for most sweete relicks, as consecrated by his touching & vsing them: why doost thou not much more loue, embrace & kisse paynes, troubles of the world, ignominie and death, not only consecrated by his touching, but also embrued and blessed with his most precious blood, moreouer embraced wt harty wil and exceeding loue, which vehemently moued him thereunto? especially seeing yt in these thou hast farre greater benefits, rewards & good things, then in those relicks. For by these thou obtaynest victory of death and hell, and of all thy sinnes, and not by them, O, if a man might haue beheld the hart of Christ, when hanging on ye crosse he was distressed, that he might make death dead & contēptible, how earnestly & sweetely he embraced death & paines for the fearfull and them that dread death & paynes, how willingly he droonke of this cup to the sicke, that we also might not be afraide to drinke thereof, while we see that no euill, but onely good came vnto him by risinge againe: without doubt it would be pure myrre, distilling from his lippes, moste pleasaunt and sweete, as the sauour and goodlines of the lillies. Hereof speaketh Peter in his first Epistle and 4. chapter: Forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for vs in the fleshe, arme your selues likewise with the same mynde. And Paule sayth Hebr. 12: Consider him that en dured suche speaking against of sinners, least ye should be wearied & faint in your mindes.

Wherefore if in the former considerations, which are of things set as yet beneath vs or by vs, we haue learned to suffer euill patiently: surely by this last, which is of that yt is now aboue & not by vs, we lifting vp our harts vnto Christ, and being made victors ouer all euills, are taught not onely to suffer them, but to loue, wishe, seeke thē. And the farther a man is of from this affection, of so much lesse force is the crosse of Christ in him, as it is in them that vse the signe of the crosse, and Christes passion a gainst euills and death, that they may not suffer nor die, endeuoring to attaine vnto that which is quite contrary to the crosse and death of Christ. Wherefore in this seuenth consideration it must needes be swallowed vp and consumed, whatsoeuer euill we suffer, so that now it doe not onely not grieue, but also delight, howbeit if this cō sideration perse the hart, & be fixed in the inward affection of the mind.

Thus much concerning the former table: the latter followeth.

VVE will deuide the second table into seuen considerations also, contrary to the former: whereof the first shall be of the inward good: The second of that which is to come: The thirde of that which is paste: The fourth of that which is beneath vs: The sift of that which is on the left hande: The sixt of that which is on the right hande: The seuenth of that which is aboue vs.

THE FIRST CHAPTER of the first consideration, which is of the inward good.

WHo is able to number euen those good thinges onely which euery one possesseth in his one person? First how many are the giftes of the bodye? as beautie, strength, health, quicknes of sense, whereunto in the male kinde may be added the moste noble sex, whereby he is fit to doe many things both priuate and publike, and to atchieue many notable exploytes, whereunto a woman is vnapt.

Nowe what a great matter is it, if by the blessing of God thou enioyest these excellent gifts ten, twenty, thirty yeares wt pleasure, & at the last art troubled in some one of them for the space of ten daies? It is a common saying among notorious offenders: It is but one ill howres matter, and agayne, A good howre is worth an ill howre. What shal be sayd of vs, who enioy many good howres, and wil not suffer euil so much as one howre? We see therefore in how great plenty we enioy the benefits of God, and with how fewe euills we are scarce touched, at the least the most of vs. Our most gratious God not content with these good thinges, giueth moreouer riches, abundance of all things, if not to all, surely to many, and to them especially that are weake to beare euills. For as I haue sayd before, vpon whom he bestoweth lesse riches, or giftes of the body, vpon them he bestoweth more giftes of the mind, that all thinges may be equall, & he a iust iudge of all. For abundance of riches doth not so much comfort as a ioyful mind. Moreouer he giueth vnto some goodly children, great pleasure, power, rule, honour, fame, glory, fauour, &c. which if he permitte to enioy a long time, yea but a small time, they will easily admonish what is to be done in a litle euill.

But the giftes of the mind are more excellent then all these, as witte, knowledge, iudgement, eloquence, wisedom, & as in the other, so in bestowing of these he vseth a meane and equalitie, so that vpon whom he hath bestowed more of these good thinges, he hath not therfore preferred them before others, whom in steede of these he hath giuen more peace or pleasure of the minde. Nowe in all these we must with thankfulnes acknowledge the large liberalitie and bountifulnes of God, & comfort our infirmity, that in the multitude & plenty of good things we do not meruel, if some sharpenes be mingled therwith, seeing that to delicat persons neither rostedmeate is liked without sauce, neither almost any other meate, which eyther hath not some sharpe taste of it selfe, or is tempered with some thinge that hath a sharpe taste: so vntolerable a thinge is continuall and onely sweetenes, that one sayde rightly: All pleasure by continuance maketh it selfe lothesome. And an other said: Pleasure it selfe at the last is a labour, euen because this life is more weake, then that it is able without the temperature of euills, to enioy onely good thinges, by reason of the ouermuch aboundance of good thinges, whereupon hath risen this prouerbe, The bones must be stronge which shall beare good dayes, which prouerbe I oftentimes considering do greatly maruell what a maruelous and true meaning it hath, that mens minds are contrary to them selues, who seke no other but good dayes, which notwithstanding when they haue obtained, they can worse away with them then with euill.

Now what other thinge are we taught hereby, but that euen in the very enemies of the crosse, the crosse is maruelous, so that by the meanes thereof all ought to be tempered and sanctified least they perish, as flesh must be seasoned with salt, lest it stincke and corrupt.

Why then doe we not most willingly receiue this tēperature sent of God, which if he should not send, our life which is not able continually to suffer pleasures & good thinges, woulde procure it of it owne accorde? We see therefore howe truely the wise man said of God: He reacheth from one ende to an other mightely, and louing ly doth he order all things. If we throughly consider these thinges, that also will appeare to be true which Moses saith Deut. 32: He hath borne him on his shoulders, he hath caried him about, and kept him as ye apple of his eye. Hereby we may stoppe the mouthes of them which vnthankefully babble that there are more euill then good thinges in this life, when as there are not wanting infinite good thinges and sweete commodities, but they are wanting which should see & acknowledge them with him that sayd: The earth is full of the goodnes of the Lorde. And agayne: The earth is full of his prayse. And Psal. 103: The earth is full of thy riches: thou hast made me glad by thy workes. Hereupon we daily singe: Heauen and earth are full of thy glory. Why so? because there are many good thinges whereby he may be praysed, howbeit of them onely which see and acknowledge this fulnes. For as we haue sayd in the first consideration of euils, that the euills of euery one are so great, as is his opinion & knowledge of them: so also good thinges although they come vnto vs abundantly on euery side, yet are they only so great as they are estemed. For al things that God hath made are exceeding good, yet are they not so acknowledged of all, as of them of whom ye 103. Psalme speaketh: They contemned that pleasant lande.

Of this consideration we may in Iob see a most goodly & singular example, who, all his goods being takē away, said: Shal we receiue good at the hande of God, & not re ceiue euil? a very golden saying, & a mighty comfort in tentation. For he did not onely suffer him selfe, but was tempted of his owne wife to impatiencie, who sayde vnto him: Doost thou continue yet in thy perfectnes? curse God & die: as if she should say: It is manifest that he is not God, who hath so forsaken thee, why therefore doost thou trust in him, & not rather denying and cursing him, acknowledgest thy selfe mortall, vnto whom nothing shal

remaine after this life? These & such like thinges doth euery mans wife, that is his sensuality & corrupt vnderstanding put into his mind in ye time of tentation, because the sense sauoureth not the things that are of God.

Howbeit these are good things common to all: but a Christian is endued with farre better inward good things, as with ye faith of Christ, wherof is spoken Psal. 44: The Kings daughter is al glorious within, her clothing is of broidered golde. For as we haue said entreating of the consideration of ye first euill, that there can be none so great euil felt in man, which is the worst of those euils that are in him: so the best of ye good things that are in a Christian he him selfe can not se. For if he did, he should be forthwith in heauen, forasmuch as the kingdom of heauē, as Christ saith, is within vs. For to haue faith is to haue the truth & word of God: to haue the worde of God is to haue God the maker of all things. Which good thinges howe great are they? if they were reuealed to the minde, it shoulde in a moment be losed from the bodye, by reason of exceeding sweetenes and pleasure: wherefore ye other good things that we haue spoken of are rightly said to be as it were certain aduertizements of those good things, which we haue wtin, which God will haue commended vnto vs by them, for yt this life can not suffer that they should be reuealed, and therfore God mercifully hideth them, vntill they haue increased vnto their full measure: no otherwise then louing parents doe sometime gyue vnto their children trifles or thinges of small value, thereby to allure their mindes to hope for greater.

Notwithstanding they doe sometimes shew out and put forth them selues, when the ioyfull conscience reioyceth in trust in God, willingly speaketh of him, heareth his word with delight and pleasure, is ready and cherefull to serue him, to doe good works, to suffer euils, &c. All which are infallible tokens of an infinite and incomparable treasure hidden within, which distilleth forth these litle droppes in small measure: although it sometime commeth to passe that it is more manifestly reuealed to mindes that are giuen to diuine contem plation, so yt being as it were in a traunce, they can not tell where they are. Such were Augustin and his mother as they confesse of them selues, and many others.

The second chapter of the second consideration, which is of the good to come or before a man.

TO them that are not Christians litle comfort can be giuen in their euills by the good things to come, for that al things be to them vncertaine. Howbeit that notable affection which is called hope, is here cause of great trouble. By which affection men comfort them selues and bid one an other hope for better thinges, whereby we vncertainely seeke after great thinges, being for the most part deceiued, as Christ teacheth of that man in the Gospell Luke 12, who sayd: I wil pul downe my barnes, and builde greater, and therein will I gather all my frutes and my goods: and I will say to my soule: soule, thou hast much goods layde vppe for many yeares, liue at ease, eate, drinke and be merie. But God said vnto him, O foole, this night will they fetch away thy soule from thee, then whose shall those thinges be which thou hast prouided? So is he that gathereth riches to him selfe, and is not rich in God.

Howbeit God leaueth not the children of men so, but in this affection to put away euill and attayne that which is good he comforteth them: albeit they be vncertaine of the thinges to come, yet doe they hope well, whereby in the meane while they are susteyned, lest that falling into the euill of desperation, they suffer not the present euill, and so doe worse thinges. Wherefore euen the affection of such hope is the gifte of God, not that he will haue them trust vnto it, but be moued to sounde and true hope which is in him alone. For he is therefore slow to anger that he may bring them to repentance, as it is sayde Rom. 2: neyther doth he suffer men to be deceyued by this deceitefull hope, if so be that they beginne from the hart and truely to hope in him.

But to Christians, beside these good things, two sortes of especiall good things shal assuredly come, howbeit by death and sufferinges. Now they also reioyce in that common vncertain hope yt the present euill shall ende, & the contrary good shall be encreased, although they doe not so much regard that, as they doe that their owne pro per good is increased, which is truth in Christ, wherein they goe forwarde from day to day, for which they both liue & hope. But beside these I haue sayd that two es peciall good thinges shall come vnto them in deathe. The first is, that by deathe the whole tragedie of the euills of this life is ended, as it is written: Precious in the sight of the Lord is ye death of his Saincts. And againe: I will lay me downe, and also sleepe in peace. Againe: Though the righteous be preuēted with death, yet shal he be in rest. Whereas contrariwise to the wicked death is the beginning of euils, as the Psalmist sayth: The death of the wicked is very euill. Againe, Euils shal come vppon the wicked man in destruction: so Lazarus shall be comforted, who hath suffered his euills here, whereas the riche glutton shall be tormented, who hath here enioyed his pleasures. So it commeth to passe, that a Christian

whether he dye or liue, hath alwayes the better: so blessed a thinge is it to be a Christian, and to beleue in Christ, whereupon Paule saith: Christ is to me life, & death is to me aduauntage. And Rom. 14. he sayth: Whether we liue, we liue vnto the Lord: or whether we die, we die vnto ye Lord: whether we liue therfore or die, we are the Lordes. This safety Christ hath obtained for vs, inasmuch as he dyed and rose agayne that he might be Lord of the liuing and dead, being able to make vs quiet and safe as well in life as in death, as the 22. Psalme sayth: Though I walke through the valley of the shadow of death, I will feare no euill, for thou art with me. If this commoditie of death doe litle moue vs, it is a signe that the faith of Christ is weake in vs, which doth not sufficiently esteeme the treasure and commoditie of a good death, or doth not yet beleue that death is good, the olde man which as yet liueth too much, & the wisedome of the fleshe hindering vs. We must endeuour therefore that we may know and loue this benefit of death. It is a great matter that death which to others is exceeding euill, shoulde be made to vs exceeding good and cōmodious. And if Christ had not brought this to passe for vs, what thinge should he haue done worthy of so great a price as he payed? It is a very diuine worke which he did, and therefore it should be no maruel to any, that he made the euill of death exceeding good.

Wherefore death is nowe deade to the faithful, and hath nothing terrible but onely a certaine semblance and appearance. No otherwise then a serpent that is slaine, in outwarde forme and appearance he is cerrible as before, but in very deede it is onely a seeming or appearance of euil, the euill it selfe is nowe dead and harmelesse. Yea as in the 21. chapter of Numb. God commaunded a brasen serpent to be set vp, by the sight wherof the liuing serpents did perish: so also our death by faithfull and stedfast beholding of the death of Christ, doth perish, and onely appeareth terrible, but can not hurt vs in very deede. So doth the mercye of God aforehande exercise vs that are weake, with these goodly figures or semblances, that forasmuch as death cā¦not be taken away, he may at ye least make the force thereof to be nothing but in outward shew and appearance only, for which cause also death in the Scriptures is called sleepe rather then death.

The other good thing that commeth by death, is, that it doth not onely ende the troubles and afflictions of this life, but which is more excellent, it maketh an end of vices and sinnes, which maketh death farre more acceptable to the faithfull, as we haue sayd before, then the good which we haue nowe spoken of. For the euills of the soule which are sinnes, are without comparison worse then the euills of the bodye. Which onely if we did knowe, they would make death most amiable vnto vs. Now if they do not so, it is a signe that we doe not sufficiently feele nor hate the euils of our soule. Whereas therfore this life is most perilous, daungerous sinne seeking to deceiue vs on euery side, and we can not liue without sinne: moste commodious death setteth vs free from these perills, and cutteth of sinne quite from vs, whereupon in the booke of wisedom it is sayd in praise of the righteous: He pleased God and was beloued of him, so that whereas he liued a monge sinners, he translated him. He was taken away least wickednes shoulde alter his vnderstanding, or deceit beguile his minde. For wickednes by bewitching ob scuteth the thinges that are good, and the vnstedfastnes of concupiscence peruerteth the simple minde (O howe true are these things and confirmed by daily experience? Though he was soone deade, yet fulfilled he much time, for his soule pleased God: therefore hasted he to take him away from wickednes.

So by the mercie of God, death, which to man was the punishment of sinne, is made to Christians the ende of sinne, and the beginning of life and righteousnes. Wherefore he that loueth life and righteousnes, must needes, not feare, but loue deathe, which is the Minister of them, and meane to come vnto them: otherwise he shall neuer attayne neyther to lyfe nor righteousnes. Nowe he that can not doe this, let him praye vnto God, that he may. For therefore are we taught to saye, Thy will be done, because we of our selues are not able to doe it, whoe fearinge deathe, doe loue death and sinne rather then life and righteousnes. For, that God ordayned deathe for the abolishinge of sinne it maye hereof be gathered, for that he enioyned deathe to Adam by and by after he had sinned, as it were amendes of sinnes, and that before he caste him out of Paradise, that he might shewe vnto vs that deathe worketh no euill, but all good in vs, seeing that it was enioyned in paradise as it were repentance and satisfaction. It is true in deede that death entred into the worlde by the malice of the Deuill, but it is to be attributed to the singular goodnes of God that death being so entred, he not onely suffered it not to hurt, but ordayned it euen from the beginning thereof for the punishment and death of sinne.

For this he signified, whereas when he had first denoūced death vnto Adam, in his commaundement that he should not eate of the tree of knowledge, he afterward notwithstanding did not holde his peace, but did againe enioyne death, & tempered the rigour of his first denouncing, yea did not so much as make mention of

death in any sillable, but onely sayde: In the sweate of thy face shalt thou eate bread, till thou be turned againe into the ground, for out of it wast thou taken: Dust thou art, and into dust shalt thou be turned again. As though he then hated death, which he would not so much as name, according to that saying: He endureth but a while in his anger, but in his fauour is life. He seemed in thus speaking, that, vnlesse death had bene necessary for ye abolishing of sinne, he woulde not so much as mention or name it, much lesse enioyne it. So against sinne which had wrought death, the emulation of God armeth no other thing but death it selfe, so that here thou mayst see that saying of the Poet verified, that the worker of death doth perishe by his owne worke, and that sinne is destroyed by it owne proper frute, and is slayne by death which it brought forth, as the viper of her ofspring. This is a most goodly sight, to see how sinne is, not by an others, but by it owne proper worke destroyed, slayne with it owne weapon, & as of Goliath, so ye head thereof cut of with it owne sworde. For Goliath was a figure of sinne, a terrible Champion to all, except litle Dauid, that is, Christ, who alone ouercame him, and cut of his heade with his owne sworde. If therefore we meditate vpon the ioyes of this power of Christ, and vpon the giftes of his grace, why should a litle euil trouble vs, when as in so great an euill to come we see so great good thinges?

The third chapter of the third consideration, which is of the good past, or behind a man.

THe consideration of this good is easie, by the contrary consideration of the euil past, we thinke it sufficient only to help him that shal cōsider hereof. Herein B. Augustin doth excellently well in his confessions, where in a most goodly sort he rehearseth ye benefits of God bestowed vpon him from his mothers wombe. The same doth Dauid in that notable 138. Psalme, ye beginning wherof is: O Lord, thou hast tried me, where among other things wondering at ye prouidence of God ouer him, he sayth: Thou vnderstandest my thoughts long before: thou compassest my paths & my lying downe. As if he sayd: Whatsoeuer I haue euer thought, whatsoeuer I haue wrought, and whatsoeuer I was to obtayne or possesse, I see now, how it was not done by mine owne industry, but ordained by thy care long before. Finally thou hast foreseene all my wayes: and there is not a word in my tongue, where then? euen in thy power. These thinges we learne by our owne experience. For if we call to minde our life past, is it not a wonderful thinge that we haue thought, willed, done, and sayd such thinges, as we neuer coulde foresee, but would haue done farre other thinges, if we had bene left to our owne free will, which we nowe first perceiue, namely we see that the hande of God hath bene so present with vs, that his care hath bene so constant ouer vs, that we could neither haue spoken, neither willed nor thought those thinges which we haue, vnles he had giuē abilitie, as it is sayd in the booke of wisedom chap. 7: In his hande are both we and our wordes. And Paule saythe: who worketh all thinges in vs. Why then are we not ashamed being senslesse and hard harted, who being taught by our owne experience, doe see howe careful the Lorde hathe bene for vs vntill this howre, and hath giuen vs all good things? and yet we can not committe the same care of vs to him in a small present euill, but we so behaue our selues, as thoughe he had forsaken vs, or coulde by any meanes forsake vs. Dauid did not so in the 39. Psalme, where he sayeth: As for me,[329] I am poore and needy, but the Lord careth for me, How should he not, sayth B. Augustine, haue care of thee, when as thou art nowe that, which he woulde thou shouldest he? But we part the rule betwene God and us: we attribute this unto him that he hath made us, & yet we scarce or faintly do that, we arrogate to our selues the care of our selues, as though he had made us, & had by andby gone away, leauing us in our owne power to be rules and gouerned.

If so be that our owne wisedom & counsels hinder us; that we can not see this care of God over us, when as perhaps many thinges fall out according to our purposes, let us with Dauid Psal. 138 enter into consideration of our selues. He sayth: My bones are not hid from thee, which thou hast made in a secret place, (that is, thou didest see and make my bones in the wombe of my mother, when as I yet was not, when as my mother did not yet knowe what was done in her) neither is it hid from thee that I was fashioned in the neather parts of the yearth (that is, the shape or forme of my bodye in the most inward howells of my mother was not hid from thee, for that thou didest frame it). What doth the Prophet meane by these wordes, but to declare unto us by this notableexample, what care God hath alwayes had of us without the knowledge or meanes of our selues? For who can glory that he hath bene a meane or helpe that he might be fashioned in his mothers wombe? Who made the mother haue a care to

[329] From this point the text is missing for two pages. The text has been supplied from the 1579 edition (see above) until the words "…him. For we see this most manifestly appeare…"

giue suck, to nourish, loue, and doe all such duties of a mother, when we did not as yet perceiue our life, yea whereof (unlesse seeing the like done in others, we did beleeue that they were also done to us) we should know or remember nothing at all, forasmuch as these thinges were done unto us, no otherwise then to them that sleepe, yea to them that be dead, or rather to them that are not, yet borne, as much as pertayneth to our knowledge.

Thus we see how without knowledge or meanes of our selues we enioye the mercies and consolations of God: We notwithstanding as yet dout, or euen deszeire, that he hath care of us euen at this day. Whom this experience will not teach and moue, I knowe not what can teach & moue im. For we see this most manifestly appeare vnto vs commonly in all infantes, so that so many examples let forth to our folly & hardues, ought worthely to make vs greatly ashamed, if we dout that euen the least good or euill commeth vnto vs without the singular care of God. Blessed Peter sayth: Cast all your care on him, for he careth for you. And Dauid sayth Psal. 36: Cast thy care vpon the Lorde, and he shall feede thee. Moreouer B. Augustine sayth vnto his soule in his confessions: Why stā dest thou vpon thy selfe and standest not in deede? cast thy selfe vpon him, for he will not withdrew his hand that thou maist fal. And againe Peter sayth, 1. Pet. 4: Wherfore let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit their soules to him in wel doing, as vnto a faithfull Creator.

O, if a man knew his God after this sort, how secure, how quiet, how pleasāt should he be? Such a one should haue God truely, knowing assuredly that all his thinges whatsoeuer they be, haue come & doe come vnto him, by the direction and disposing of God his most sweete will. The saying of Peter standeth certaine, he careth for you. What can we heare more sweete & pleasant then this saying? therefore sayth he, cast all your care vpon him. If we doe not this, what doe we else, but endeuour to let & hinder the care of God, & also make our life vnto our selues troublesom, painefull, careful, by many feares, cares & troubles? and that in vaine, for we doe not any thing hereby further our rest or quietnes, but as the Preacher in his booke sayth: This is a vanitie of vanities, & vexation of the spirit. For in all the same booke he speaketh of experience hereof, inasmuch as he had tried many things for him selfe, and in all notwithstanding he founde nothing but labour, vanitie & vexation of the spirit: so that he concludeth, that it is the gift of God, if a man eate & drinke, & reioice with his wife, that is, liueth without care, committing ye care of him selfe vnto God. Wherefore we ought to haue no other care of our selues, thē yt we may not be careful for our selues, & may commit the care of vs vnto God. As for other things that might be spokē here, euery one may as I haue sayd know them by the contrary consideration, and by calling to mind his whole life past.

The fourth chapter of the fourth consideration, which is of the good beneath vs.

Hitherto we haue seene the good things which are our owne, and in our selues, we will nowe consider those that are in others, and without vs: the first whereof is in them which are beneath vs, that is the dead and damned. Howbeit it seemeth very straunge, that any good can be found in the deade and damned. But the power of ye diuine goodnes is euery where so great, that it maketh that we may se good things euen in the greatest euils. Now let vs first compare them with our selues, then shall we see our inestimable commodities, as it may easily be vnderstoode by the contrary consideration of euills. For as great euils of death and hel as we see in them, so great without dout doe we see our commodities to be, yea and so much greater, as their euills are greater. All which are not to be lightly passed ouer, forasmuch as they doe greatly commende vnto vs the exceeding mercie of God. And it is to be feared, that if we make small account of these, we shall be found vnthankefull, and condemned to gither with them, or tormented worse, for that the more we see them to be grieued & sorrowfull, so much more ought we to reioyce for Gods goodnes toward vs, accor ding to that saying in Esai chap. 65: Behold, my seruaunts shall eate, but ye shall haue hunger: behold, my seruaunts shall drinke, but ye shall suffer thirst: beholde, my seruaunts shall be merie, but ye shallbe confounded: behold my seruaunts shall reioyce for very quietnes of hart, but ye shal crie for sorrowe of harte, and complayne for vexation of minde: your name shall ye leaue accursed amonge my chosen, &c. Finally as I haue said, the examples of them that die ill, and are condemned, as B. Gregorie sayth in a certaine Dialogue, ought to bringe this good vnto vs, that they shoulde admonishe and teach vs, that he is happye, whome other mens harmes doe make to beware. Howbeit this good, forasmuch as it is commonly knowne, doth litle moue vs, when as notwithstanding it is to be counted amonge the chiefe, and is not lightly esteemed of them that are wise: forasmuch as a great part of the holy Scripture tendeth hereunto, namely where it is taught of the wrath, iudgements & threatnings of God. Which most wholsome doctrine, the examples of the

most miserable should make most wholsom vnto vs, which then begin to be effectuall, when we are so affected as they are which suffer them, and as though we were in their place and person. For then they wil moue and admonish vs to prayse his goodnes, who hath preserued vs from those thinges.

These dead & damned must be compared also with God him selfe, whereby we may see the diuine iustice in them. This albeit it be harde, yet must we endeuour to doe it. For seeing that God is a iust Iudge, his iustice muste be loued and praysed: and therfore must we reioice in God euen then when he destroyeth the euill both in body and soule, because in all these his entire and vnspeakeable iustice shineth. Wherefore hell also is full of God and the souereigne good as well as heauen. For the iustice of God is God himselfe, and God is the souereigne good. As his mercie therefore, so also his iustice or iudgemēt ought with most hartie affection to be loued, and most highly to be extolled and praysed. Whereupon Dauid sayeth: The righteous shall reioyce when he seeth the vengeance: he shall washe his handes in the blood of the wicked. For this cause the Lorde forbad Samuell 1. Kinges. 16, that he shoulde mourne no more for Saul, sayinge: Howe longe wilt thou mourne for Saul, seeing I haue cast him awaye from reigning ouer Israell? As if he sayde: Doth my wil so displease thee, that thou preferrest mans will before myne? Finally hereupon come those sayinges of prayse and ioye through the whole Psalter, that the Lorde is a Iudge of the widowes, and a Father of the fatherlesse, that he will auenge the afflicted and iudge the poore: that his enemies shall be confounded, the wicked shall be destroyed, and many suche like. If any will with foolishe pitie haue compassion on that bloody generation, which slayeth the righteous (yea euen the Sonne of God) & of that exceding great company of the wicked, he shal be found to reioyce at their wickednes, and to allow those things that they haue done, being worthy to perish together with them, whose sinnes he would not haue punished: and he shal heare that saying which is in the second booke of Kinges chap. 19: Thou louest thine enemies, and hatest thy frendes. For so sayde Ioab to Dauid, when he too much mourned for wicked Absolon his sonne. Wherfore we ought here to reioyce at all the godlines of the Sainctes, and the iustice of God, who most iustly punisheth the persecutors of godlines, that he may deliuer his elect from them. And so thou seest that not small but exceeding good thinges doe manifestly appeare in the deade and damned: namely, that the iniurie of all the Sainctes is reuenged and punished, and thine also if thou be righteous with them. What maruell is it then, if by thy present euill he punish thine enemie, that is the sinne of thy body, yea thou oughtest to reioyce because of this most excellent benefit of Gods iustice, who, thou not desiring it, so slayeth and destroyeth in thy selfe thy worst enemie, that is, thy sinne. Whereof if thou haue compassion, thou shalt be foūd a frend of sinne, and an enemie of iustice working in thee: which thou must especi ally take heede of, lest it be sayd vnto thee also: Thou louest thine enemies, and hatest thy frendes. As therfore thou oughtest to reioyce on the behalfe of iustice being seuere against thy sinne, so thou oughtest to reioyce on the behalfe of the same also, being seuere against the wicked, which are enemies of men and God. Thus thou seest that in the greatest euills are seene singular good thinges, and that we may reioyce in the greatest euills, not because of the euills them selues, but because of the soue reigne goodnes of iustice that deliuereth and auengeth vs.

The fift chapter of the fift consideration, which is of the good on the left hand.

HEre we must enter into consideration of our aduersaries, who as yet remaine in this life (for in the chapter going before we haue spoken of them that are al ready damned and in like case with the deuills) these we must beholde with an other affection, and consider two sortes of their good thinges. First that they abound with temporall good thinges, so that the Prophets haue bene almost moued euen to enuie by their prosperitie, as Dauid Psal. 72: My feete were almost gone, my steps had wellneare slipt: for I freated at the folish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. And afterwardes: Loe these are the wicked, yet prosper they alway, and increase in riches. Ieremie chap. 12 sayth: O Lorde thou art more righteous then that I should dispute with thee, neuerthelesse let me talke with thee in thinges reasonable: Howe happeneth it that the way of the vngodly is so prosperous? and that it goeth so well with them, which without any shame offend and liue in wickednes?

Why doth he freely poure forth so many good things vpon them, and lose them, but that he may comfort vs, and declare how good he is vnto them which are pure in hart as the same 72 Psalme sayth. He that is so good to the wicked, howe much more good will he be to the godly? albeit he tryeth them with many euills, so that not onely in the present good thinges, but also in them that be hid and as yet to come, they acknowledge him to be good vnto them, and saye with Dauid in the same Psalme: As for me,

it is good for me to drawe neare to God, to put my trust in the Lorde. As if he sayde: Albeit I am somwhat troubled, inasmuch as I see them free, notwithstanding I trust that God is muche more gracious vnto me then vn to them. And so the visible good thinges of the wicked are a meane to stirre vs vp to hope for inuisible good thinges, and to contemne the euills that we suffer, according to the commaundement of Christ Matth. 6, where he biddeth vs to beholde the foules of the ayre, and the Lillies of the fielde, and sayth? If God then so clothe the grasse of the fielde, which is to daye, and to morrow is cast into the ouen, shall he not doe much more vnto you, O ye of litle faythe? Wherefore by comparing together the good thinges wherewith the euill abounde, and the euill which we suffer, our faythe is exercised, and wee obtayne comfort in God, which onely is holy and true comfort, so that all thinges work together for the best vnto ye Saincts.

The other good, which is much more meruelous, is, that their euills are vnto vs good, such a care hath God of vs. For although their sinnes be offensiue to the weaker sort, yet to the stronge they are an exercise of vertue, and an occasion more strongly to fight, & to obtaine a more glorious victorie. For blessed is the man that endureth tentation, for when he is tryed he shall receiue the crowne of life. Now what is a greater tentation then that multitude of most wicked examples? Hereof is the worlde called one of the enemies of the Sainctes of God, for that by the enticements and wicked workes thereof it moueth, prouoketh and allureth from the way of God vnto his owne waye, as it appeareth Gen. 6: The sonnes of God sawe the daughters of men that they were fayre, & they tooke them wiues such as they liked from amonge them all. And Num. 25 it is sayd that the children of Israel committed whoredom with the daughters of Moab, so that it is wholsom for vs to be alwayes afflicted with some trouble, lest that being weake, and stumbling at the offences of the world, we fal and sinne. Wherfore Lot is commended of Peter 2. Pet. 2, for that he suffered many thinges by the most wicked example of the Zodomites, and increased in righteousnes hereby. It is needefull therefore that these offences come, which may be an occasion to vs to fight & obtaine the victorie. Notwithstanding wo vnto the world because of offences. Nowe if in the sinnes of others God procureth vnto vs so great good things, how much more ought we to beleeue with our whole hart that he will worke good vnto vs in our owne euil, although the sense and fleshe iudge other wise.

No lesse good doth the worlde bringe vnto vs on the otherside of his euils, which is aduersitie. For whom it can not winne by enticements, neither adioyne to it selfe by euill examples, them it endeuoureth by afflictions to expell from it selfe, and to trouble them by painefull euills, alwayes either seeking deceitfully to entrap them by the example of the wicked, or cruelly raging against thē by grieuous torments. For this is that monster Chimera hauing a head fayre like the head of a virgin, a belly terrible like the belly of a Lyon, a tayle deadely like the tayle of a Serpent: for the ende as well of the pleasure as of the tyrannie of the worlde is poyson and eternall deathe. As therefore in the sinnes of the world God hath made vs to finde good thinges, so also the persecutions thereof are not in vaine and frustrate, but are ordained for the increase of our good things, that euen in that wherein they hurte vs, they may be compelled to profit vs, as B. Augustine speaketh of Herode who slue the children: He coulde neuer haue profited so much by obedience, as he profited by hatred. And B. Agatha went reioycing to the prison as vnto a banket, saying after this sorte: Vnlesse thou make my bodye to be handled throughly of thy tormentors, my soule can not with glorious victorie enter into Paradise: euen as the grayne if it be not well threshed & beaten out of the huske, is not layde vppe in the garner. But why doe we here stande vpon these fewe examples? seeing we knowe that the whole Scripture, the writinges and sayinges of all the Fathers, the works and deedes of all the Sainctes doe agree in this, that they are moste profitable to the beleeuers, who seeme to be vnto them moste hurtefull, so that they be rightly suffered and borne: as Peter sayeth in his first Epistle chap. 3: And who is it that can harme you, if ye followe that which is good? And Dauid sayeth Psal. 88: The enemie shall not oppresse him, neyther shall the wicked hurte him. Howe shall he not hurte him, when he oftentymes euen killeth him? surely because by hurting he doth greatly profitte him. So we see that we doe on euery side dwell in the middes of good thinges, if we be wise, and yet also in the middes of euills, so meruelously are all thinges ordered by the power of the diuine goodnes.

The sixt chapter of the sixt consideration, which is of the good on the right hand.

THis is the Church of the Saincts, the newe creature of God, our brethren & frends, in whom we see nothing but good, nothing but consolation, howebeit not alwaies wt fleshly eies (for according to ye out¦ward appearāce they are for ye most part to be referred to the contrary

consideration of euils) but with spiritual eyes. Although euen those their good thinges also which are seene with fleshly eies, are not to be reiected, but we may perceiue that euen in these God doth comfort vs. For Dauid in the 72 Psalme durst not disalow of all that possessed riches in the world, saying: If I should say that I woulde iudge after this sort, lo then I should cōdemne ye generation of thy children, that is, if I shoulde say that all are euill, which are rich, healthful, and had in estimation, I shoulde then condemne thy Sainctes, of whome many are such. The Apostle moreouer teacheth Timothe to charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not hie minded, not for bidding them to be rich. And ye Scripture declareth that Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob were rich. Daniel with his fellowes were had in honour and reputacion euen in Ba bylon: finally many Kinges of Iuda were holy men. Dauid therfore cōsidering these sayth: If I should say that I would iudge so, I shoulde condemne the generation of thy children. God I say giueth to his abundance of these good thinges, to the comfort of them & of others, but these are not their of euils) but with spiritual eyes. Although euen those their good thinges also which are seene with fleshly eies, are not to be reiected, but we may perceiue that euen in these God doth comfort vs. For Dauid in the 72 Psalme durst not disalow of all that possessed riches in the world, saying: If I should say that I woulde iudge after this sort, lo then I should cōdemne ye generation of thy children, that is, if I shoulde say that all are euill, which are rich, healthful, and had in estimation, I shoulde then con demne thy Sainctes, of whome many are such. The Apostle moreouer teacheth Timothe to charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not hie minded, not for bidding them to be rich. And ye Scripture declareth that Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob were rich. Daniel with his fellowes were had in honour and reputacion euen in Ba bylon: finally many Kinges of Iuda were holy men. Dauid therfore cōsidering these sayth: If I should say that I would iudge so, I shoulde condemne the generation of thy children. God I say giueth to his abundance of these good thinges, to the comfort of them & of others, but these are not their

This is the Communion of Sainctes, wherin we reioyce. And who doth not glory here euen in great euills, who beleueth, as it is in deede, that the good thinges of all the Saincts are his good thinges, that his euill is theirs also, For this consideration is most sweete and pleasaunt, whereof the Apostle admonisheth in the Epistle, to the Galathians in this saying: Beare ye one an others burden, and so fulfill the law of Christ. Is it not good for vs to be here, where if one member, as the Apostle saith 1. Cor. 12, suffer, all suffer with it: if one member be had in honour, al the members reioyce with it? Therefore when I suffer, I suffer not now alone, all Christians suffer with me, yea Christ him selfe, as it is sayd: He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of myne eye. So others beare my burden, their power is mine, the fayth of the Church helpeth my infirmitie, the chastitie of others beareth the tentation of my lust, the fastings of others are for my commoditie, the prayer of an other is carefull for me, and briefly the members are so carefull one for an other, that those which are more honest doe couer, keepe, honour them that seeme vnhonest, as the Apostle notably describeth 1. Cor. 12. And so I may truely reioyce in the good thinges of an other, as if they were mine owne. Be it then that I be foule and filthye, yet they whom I loue, and with whome I reioyce, are fayre & goodly; by which loue I make not onely their good thinges, but euen them selues mine. Wherefore my ignominie shal be easily honoured vnder their glorie, their abundance shal supply my want. Who then can despeire in sinne? who doth not reioyce in afflictions, for that he doth not now beare his sinnes and paynes, or if he beare them, he beareth them not alone, being holpen with so many Sainctes that are the sonnes of God, yea being holpen of Christ him selfe? So excellent a thing is the Communion of Saincts, & the church of Christ.

Now if there be any that doth not beleue that these things are thus, he is an infidell, and hath denied Christ & the church. For although these thinges were not felt, yet are they so in deede: but who doth not feele them? For that thou doost not despeire, that thou doost not become impatient, who is the cause? Thyne owne power? no surely, but the communion of Saincts. Otherwise thou wert not able to beare euen a small sinne, thou couldest not suffer the worde of a man agaynste thy selfe: so nighe is Christ and the Churche. This is that which we saye: I beleeue in the holy Ghost, the holy Catholike Church, the Communion of Sainctes. Nowe wherein doe the Sainctes communicate? euen in good and euill thinges, all things are common amonge them all, as the Sacrament of the Lordes supper doth signifie in the breade and wine, we are sayde of the Apostle to be one breade, one body. Nowe who offendeth a part of the body, wherein he offendeth not the whole bodye? what doth ye litle toe suffer, which ye whole body doth not suffer? what good is done euen to the feete, wherein the whole body doth not reioyce? But we are one body: whatsoeuer an other suffereth, I suffer and beare it, and whatsoeuer good is done to him, it is

done to me. So sayth Christ, that it is done to him, whatsoeuer is done to the least of his. Who taking a peece of the bread of the Lordes Supper, is not sayd to take bread? who contemning a peece thereof, is not sayd to contemne bread?

Wherefore if we be grieued, if we suffer, if we die, let vs remember and firmely beleue and be assured, that not we, or that not we alone, but Christ and the Church are grieued, suffer and die with vs. Christ would not haue vs to be alone in the way of deathe, which euery man dreadeth, but the whole Church accompanying vs, we enter into the way of suffering and death, and the Church doth suffer more strongly then we our selues, so that we may truely apply to our selues yt which Eliseus said to his seruaūt being afraid: 4. King 6: Feare not, for they that be with vs are moe then they that be with them. And Eliseus prayed and sayd: Lord I beseech thee open the eyes of this yong man that he may see: and the Lord opened the eyes of the yong man and he looked: and behold the mountayne was full of borses & charrets of fire rounde about Eliseus. This onely also remayneth vnto vs, that we pray that our eyes may be opened, that we may see the Church about vs, that, I say, the eyes of our faith may be opened, then shall we feare nothing, but shall perceiue that to be most true which Dauid sayeth Psal. 124: As the mountaines are about Ierusalem, so is the Lord about his people from henceforth and for euer. Amen.

The seuenth chapter of the seuenth consideration, which is of the good aboue vs.

I Speake nothing of the eternall and heauenly good thinges which the blessed enioy in the manifest sight of God, or at the least I speake of them in faith, and as they may be comprehended of vs. So this seuenth consideration is of Iesus Christ, the King of glorye, raysed from the deade: as the seuenth consideration of euills was of him suffering, dead, and buried. Here we may see the chiefe ioy of our hart, and certaine and sure good thinges: here is no euil at all, because Christ being raised from ye dead, dyeth no more: death hath no more dominion ouer him. This is the furnace of loue, and the fire of God in Sion, as Esai sayth. For Christ is borne vnto vs, and not onely that, but also giuen vnto vs. Wherefore his resurrection is mine, and all thinges that he hath wrought therby. And as the Apostle most notably glorieth Rom. 8: Howe shall he not with him giue vs all thinges? But what hathe he wrought by rysing agayne? He hath destroyed sinne, set vp righteousnes, swallowed vp death, & restored life: ouercome hell, and purchased eternall glorie. These thinges are inestimable, so that the minde of man dare scarce beleeue, that they are giuen vnto him: as Iacob Gen. 45, when he hearde that his sonne Ioseph was aliue and gouernour ouer the lande of Egypt, as it were awaking out of a deepe sleepe, he did not beleeue them that tolde him, vntill they telling vnto him all the wordes of Ioseph, which he had sayd vnto them, shewed him also all the charretts, which Ioseph had sent to carie him. So surely it is harde to beleeue that so great good thinges are in Christ bestowed vpon bs that are vnworthye, vnlesse in many wordes he declare the same vnto vs, and as he made him selfe manifest to his Disciples by often appearing vnto them, so he teach vs so to beleeue, as it were by charrets, that is, by vse and experience. It is a most goodly and pleasaunt charret, that of God he is made vnto vs wisedome, righteousnes, sanctification and redemption, as the Apostle sayth 1. Cor. 1. For I am a sinner, but I am caried in his righteousnes, which is giuen vnto me: I am vncleane, but his holines is my sanctification, wherein I am sweetely caried: I am foolish, but his wisedom carieth me: I am damnable, but his liberty is my redemption: so that a Christian which beleueth may glory of the merits of Christ, and of all his good thinges no otherwise then if he him self had done them, so properly do they belong vnto him, so that he dare now quietly looke for euen ye iudgement of God, which notwithstanding is intolerable. So great a thing is faith, so great good things doth it obtaine for vs, so glorious sonnes of God doth it make vs. For we can not be sonnes, vnlesse we inherit the good thinges of our father. A Christian therefore may boldly say: Death, where is thy victorie? death, where is thy stinge, that is, sinne? for the stinge of death is sinne, and the strength of sinne is the law, but thankes be vnto God, which hath giuen vs victorie through our Lord Iesus Christ: that is, the lawe maketh vs sinners, sinne maketh vs guiltie of death. Who hath ouercome these two? Our owne righteousnes? our owne life? No surely, but Iesus Christ raysed from death, who hath condemned sinne & death, hath imparted his righteousnes vnto vs, hath giuen vs his merites, hath layed his hand vpon vs, so that we are in good case, and doe fulfill the law, and ouercome sinne and death, for which honour, prayse and thankes be to God for euer, Amen.

This therfore is the last consideration, whereby we are now lifted vp not onely aboue our owne euills, but also aboue our owne good thinges, and doe now enioy the good thinges of an other, gotten by an others labour, who before were oppressed with the euills caused by the sinne

of an other, and increased by our owne: We enioy I say the righteousnes of Christ, wherby he him selfe is righteous, because we cleaue vnto it, by which he pleaseth God, and maketh intercession for vs, & maketh him selfe wholy ours, being our most gratious Priest and Patron. As vnpossible therefore as it is that Christ in his righteousnes should not please, so vnpossible is it yt we should not please by our faith whereby we cleaue to his righteousnes. Whereby it commeth to passe that a Christian is omnipotent, Lorde of all, possessing all thinges, doing all thinges, wholy without any sinne. And although it so be that he haue sinnes, yet can it not be yt they should hurt him, but they are remitted because of ye inuincible righteousnes of Christ which swalloweth vp all sinnes, whereunto our faith trusteth, firmely beleuing that Christ is such a one vnto vs, as we saye. For he that doth not beleue that, heareth in vaine, acknowledgeth not Christ, neither knoweth whereunto he profiteth or serueth.

Wherefore euen this one consideration, if there were no other, may minister vnto vs so much comfort, if it be well and duely had, that we may not onely not be grieued at our euils, but also reioyce in tribulations, scarce feeling them by reason of the ioy which we haue in Christ. Of which ioy our Christ our Lorde and God blessed for euer make vs partakers, Amen.

By these my cogitations most famous Prince, witnessing after a sort the duety of my small abilitie, I commende me to your most noble grace, being ready to performe greater thinges, if the power of my spirit were according to my desire. For I will alwayes be a dettour both to euery of my neighbours, but especially to your most noble Grace, whom our Lord Iesus Christ by his gracious goodnes long preserue among vs, & at the last bring to him selfe by a blessed and happy ende, Amen.

Your Graces most humble and obedient subiect
MARTIN LVTHER.

Type in this volume:
Page Headings: Aldhabi 28
Body: EB Garamond 10